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NEW ENGLAND'S CHATTELS:

OR,

Life in the Northern Poor-House.

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# NEW ENGLAND'S CHATTELS:

OR,

## L I F E

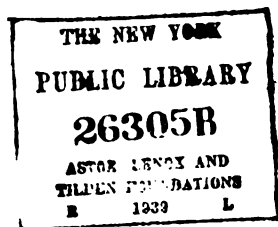
IN THE

### Northern Poor-House.

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"PAUPER: A poor person; particularly one so indigent as to depend on the parish or town for maintenance."—WEBSTER.  
~~~~~

New-York:  
H. DAYTON, 107 NASSAU STREET,  
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## PREFACE.

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I HAVE here written a few things concerning the paupers of New England, the land of civilization and religion, but not a THOUSANDTH part of those TRUE stories that may yet be told of them, their sufferings, their neglect, their vice, *nor have I told the worst*—JUDGE YE!

I have not dealt in personalities. My actors, such as Squire Stout, Mr. Haddock, Captain Bunce, etc., represent character merely. Nor have I given in caricature a real locality to the scenes. Unhappily these lie broadcast all over New England.

THE AUTHOR.







NEW ENGLAND'S CHATTELS;  
OR,  
LIFE IN THE NORTHERN POOR-HOUSE.

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CHAPTER I.

The Story begins with RELICS, where many a one ends.

AMONG the ragged and miserable creatures in the Crampton poor-house, some of them old and others young, put in and there kept by the town authorities, was a widow of seventy years, a pious old soul, whose name was Charity Prescott. They called her sometimes Mrs. Prescott, or Miss Prescott, the widow Prescott, and the pious old Mrs., Miss, or the widow Prescott. She was poor, but good. Almost everybody loved her, and there were a good many individual Christians and moral people in Crampton who had much preferred she had not gone to the poor-house for her support. However, there she went, and Captain Bunce, the proprietor, held her in some sort of regard. He told Mrs. Bunce that she was probably honest, and well meaning, though broken down in mind, and very simple and childish, and he should grant her "every indulgence."

"Don't be too generous now, Captain Bunce," said his wife, "for you know these are hard times, and we may work ourselves to death for the creatures, without the *first red cent or thank'e* ma'am from the town, or any

soul in it. And as for the lazy, idle coots themselves, the more you do for them, the more you may do ; don't you know it, Captain Bunce ?”

Captain Bunce knew all about it, he said, as well as she did ; knew the whole thing by heart—knew it perfectly—but his mind was made up about the widow Prescott, that she should have “every possible indulgence.”

Now to hear this honeyed phraseology as it dropped from the mouth of the Captain, one would be sure that Mrs. Prescott would be well taken care of at all events ; that she could not feel the want of any thing that lay in Captain Bunce's power to provide for her ; that he would not hesitate the fractional part of a minute to do her any service. One would suppose *that* “every,” as he used it, covered a great field of indulgences—a very great many comforts represented—almost too many.

Mrs. Prescott *was* indulged with a single room. Once there had been a large closet to the bed-room on the north side of the kitchen, under the kitchen stairs. This had now been enlarged by building on a small wing—so called—about four feet being added, and this enlargement—nay, the whole affair, closet and appendage—was assigned to Mrs. Prescott as her room. It had a door that might be fastened ; a little window, a narrow, old cot-bed, a piece of a looking-glass, a comb, and a paper curtain. It was a room, some eight by nine feet, quite a commodious little affair. Here in an old ruined bowl she cultivated a geranium. No vicissitudes of her fortunes had robbed her of her Bible. This apartment, with its furniture, and two chairs also, one of them smuggled in by blind Hetty, was, to Mrs. Prescott, one of the Captain's indulgences.

*Was she not, reader, a well cared for human being ?*

Consider that she had outlived two or three generations ; that her usefulness was gone ; that she was hardly known on the church records as a living member ; that she was very poor, very dependent—say, was not the pious old widow Prescott well taken care of? The town taxed itself to support her at five cents a day, and sold her every year at auction, or “contracted,” as we say at the North, for her support on these conditions, if others better failed. And here she is, in a ripe old age, cared for in this nice little jewel of a way, i. e., room. Could any thing be more appropriate? Was she not a happy, heaven-ripening saint under these peculiar indulgences and privileges? At any rate, here she is. So we go on and say that here the good old widow passed her days and nights whenever she wished to retire from the common sittings of her companions. Here she put on and off her spectacles, read her Bible, and prayed. Here she meditated on the ways of Providence. Here she occupied herself in the trifling sewings, knittings and darnings. Here she not unfrequently had a visitor of the “House,” as they called their own quarters, and gave good counsel to the desponding and reproof to the wayward and vicious. And it was not a rare thing for somebody from the “Captain’s” to run in and chat with her, especially for “blind Hetty,” who, in the summer, would stand for an hour at the open window, asking questions and telling stories, and hearing good things and many Bible truths, and comforts for a poor young blind creature such as she. Nor were they lost upon her. No, no. On the blind HETTY? No.

This aged, poverty-stricken widow, had seen a fair supply of misfortune, as we call it, in her life. She was early married to Mr. Samuel Prescott—afterwards, Deacon Samuel Prescott. She became the mother of eight

children, most of whom died before they were twenty years of age, although her eldest son and one of the daughters lived to get married and settle down in comfortable homes near the paternal dwelling. But the daughter died when her second child was born, which in a fortnight followed her, and the husband becoming intemperate died on the eve of another marriage with a dissolute woman. Their first child lived with his grand parents till he was ten years of age, when a cold which he had taken threw him into a fever and soon ended his days. So the family branch in that direction failed.—The married son had no children, and both husband and wife fell victims to a malignant fever in the neighborhood during the tenth year of their married life.

Deacon Prescott and his wife were nearly the whole time of their married life in mourning. Is it not strange ! A married pair always clad, however green and fair the world, sunny and joyous and gay, themselves always, always in mourning ! Their little property by degrees failed them in consequence of their repeated trials, and the deacon himself was stricken with paralysis, and lay five years helplessly on his couch. He was not a man of much worldly thrift, though a Christian man of great experience and readiness in divine things. When at last he gave up life, his property was about gone, and his wife left childless, feeble, poor, dependent—after several years of effort to support herself aided by the charities of the church, and of her friends, cast herself on the town. And here, in the poor-house is Mrs. Prescott, as comfortable as the poor-house customs will allow.

She is a little childish or simple, it is true—not precisely what she once was, although she has got through *a great sum of earthly trouble with much fortitude, and*

with as much strength of mind as might be expected, left to one in her circumstances. But whatever weakness of mind she may occasionally exhibit, her recollections of Scripture are ever fresh, and on religious matters her conversation is remarkably clear and happy. There's a good deal in old mother Prescott after all. She'll cost the town something yet, even at five cents a day.

The cool mornings and evenings of late October days have come, the trees drop off their autumn-dyed leaves, heavy frosts often crisp the grass, the sheep and fowls begin to seek the warm side of the old buildings where the morning brings up the rays of the sun. And one of these mornings, directly after breakfast, at the poor-house, a breakfast of gruel, potatoes, and poor bread and molasses, served on the old pine table, served with iron spoons, broken knives and forks, on blue-edged and glazed-cracked plates, Mrs. Prescott, in one of her last white cambric caps, with that old-fashioned, motherly, wide, starchless, flapping border, in dark woollen skirt, and apron with long strings—a neat “fix on” even for herself and her “indulgences,” is in her little room, putting it to rights, and then brushing back the gray locks that hang out here and there a fluttering signal of old age, when in comes aunt Dorothy Brinsmade. This old woman, say of sixty-five, appears as usual in a very tattered, ragged rig, carelessly hitched together, and unequally equipoised on her curving frame, shuffling along in old shoes she comes, smoking at a broken pipe, with heavy clouds of strong smoke curling in her wake, and her advance noted by the odd and even tune of her old crooked staff and crutch on the floor. She comes in humming some strange thing between a march and a *psalm tune*, as aunt Dorothy is now rather weak-headed

—having got on the slippery side of her life's hill. Twenty years of her time have been penitentiary years, a long flight of years truly ; some of them, we would say, passed in poor-houses. She has had, at times, a reputation by no means the best, including in the category, the matters of lying, pilfering and wantonness, although it was always hard to "spot" her in the very matters that this gossip was built on, and at all events, since aunt Dorothy came, eight or ten years ago, to the staff and the crutch, light fingering and frolicsomeness have been of her rather matters of the historic past, than of actual present recurrence. She is rather a good soul among the poor ones of the poor-house, and bears up tolerably well under her day of trial. She is a native of the town, and was once married, but marriage and she had little to say of one another.

"And how does Mrs. Prescott do this morning?" said she, "ai ?

"Drum, drum, drum ; dro, de-dro, de-dri, dri dri ;  
The mountains melt, the seas retire.

"Pretty well, Mrs. Prescott ?

"Rubadub—rubadub, rubadub, dub, dub ;  
The seas retire ——."

"I'm tolerable for an old woman, aunt Dorothy, thank ye."

"Wal now—*drum, drum*—that's about all a body can 'spect of life now days. I'm tolerable too—thanks to a good constitution from Providence, and a merry sort of spirits—

"Drum de drum ; drum de drum, drum dro ;  
Once I thought my mountain strong—mountain strong,  
Drum, drum ——."

"Never mind, aunt Dorothy," interrupted the widow,

well knowing her visitor's wandering, loquacious tongue, and endless songs—so hoping to put her on a new track, "How old do you think I am to-day?" she asked.

"How old!—*drum, drum, drum*—I reckon you are nigh on t' eighty, p'raps eighty-five or ninety—at any rate, considerable up in life and growing older mighty fast, ai?"

"Why, aunt Dorothy! you don't now—why I am only seventy-four, that's not so very old, specially on Bible grounds. You know the Bible tells us of persons living ——"

"Three score and ten—*dum de dum*—," interrupted aunt Dorothy.

"Yes, I know; and four-score—but they used to live several hundreds, and now-a-days persons often live ninety and a hundred years."

"Not very often—*drum dru*——"

"Once, aunt Dorothy, people lived to be eight hundred years old. There was Adam, the first man, who lived even till he was nine hundred and thirty years old; and Methuselah, you know, was nine hundred and sixty-nine years old. And there was Noah ——"

"Pshaw, pshaw, widow Prescott! Them's old folks that's been dead and gone morne a thousand years, when there warn't any poor-houses, and everybody was rich, and all the women rode in coaches, in silk dresses, and never knew when they got old. But I say—*drum, drum, drum*—nobody now-a-days sees such times; nor nobody wants to—do you, Miss Prescott? They were a great long time ago; folks now-a-days get old when they are fifty or sixty—*drum de drum, drum, drum*—who cares for Adam?"

"But, aunt Dorothy, the Bible's the Bible for all that, and you know we must believe it."



"Sartin! I've been a firm believer of it all my born days."

"It ain't of no consequence, aunt Dorothy, whether we are old or young, if we have a good firm faith in the Bible, and a good hope, for then we are ready to die any time, you know!"

"Sartin! I know it, and that's what I tell them all—*drum, drum, dro.*"

"You see, aunt Dorothy, ain't your pipe going out?"

"I believe so. (*Puff, puff, puff.*) Now it smokes again."

"Well, as I was going to say, we're in rather straitened circumstances here—but it might be worse; now we want the Bible to comfort and support us."

"Yes." (*Puff, puff, puff.*) "Is this pipe out or not?" (*Puff, puff, puff.*)

"I don't let a day go by without drawing comfort from it."

"It's a great comfort to you." (*Puff, puff, puff.*)

"I find it so. I read very often the words of good old pious David. 'I have never seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread.'"

"Is that in the Bible? Now it goes. (*Puff, puff, puff.*)

"'In the Bible,' aunt Dorothy! Indeed it is, every word of it; did not you know that?"

"Well, I guess I did, but I don't know exactly. *Drum, drum, drum.*"

"Precious words they are for us poor souls," said the widow.

"Well, we are poor souls, sure enough. I told Cap'n Bunce I had'n't a whole dress to my back, nor a sheet to my bed, and what do you think he said, ai?"

"I don't know ; sometimes he speaks rather quick and ——"

"*I* know. He told me to go to ——, with my back ; he'd give me a new dress when his ship come in from India, and not afore, ai ! How do you like that, widow ? D—— him !" said she, with a fury-fire in her face—a shake of her staff ; after which she hummed away as before—

"Drum de drum ; drum-de drum, dri, dro ;  
Rise my soul and stretch thy wing ——"

"Oh, well, aunt Dorothy—he's '*quick*,' I say—and it's a trying world ; but we must have patience and not return railing for railing, but contrariwise blessing ——"

"I 'blessed' him," she replied. "I told him he'd go there before I did, or never get his just desarts."

"You did, not now, aunt Dorothy, speak so to him ?"

"Yes I did too ; and I slamm'd the door in his face. He's an old, hard, grinding hypocrite. Hang him ! He's starving us to death, and freezing us to death—and the other day he kicked old Joe so that he's laid up for all winter, I'll bet you a guinea, as stiff as my cane."

"What made him do that ?"

"Nothing. Just because Joe didn't incline to work out in a rain storm. Nothing."

"And is old Joe really hurt ?"

"'Really hurt !' I guess you'd think so."

"And laid up ?"

"'Laid up ?' Yes, he can't get off the bed. He's half dead ; and he says he'd rather die than live any longer, any how."

"It's terrible to die so, aunt Dorothy."

"Who cares ?" (*Puff, puff, puff*).

"Perhaps I can go and comfort him with something out of the Bible—what do you think, aunt Dorothy ?"

"Well now, that's a good notion, Mrs. Prescott, any way. Just do it now. He's a harmless old crittur, we all know, and it won't hurt him if it does him no good, just as it don't me, you know.

"Drum, drum, drum ; dri, dro, dri,  
Saints and sinners there shall meet—shall meet,  
Dri, dro, dri, drum, dri, dro ——"

"Well, let us go and see him, right away. Perhaps he'll relish a little good talk if he's so poorly off, any how."

So old aunt Dorothy Brinsmade, with her staff and crutch, hobbled away, and the widow, bending with age, hobbled after. But at the foot of the stairs, up which their way led them to Joe's quarters, they encountered blind Hetty, with a bowl and a plate in her hands. She had evidently been on an errand of kindness to some one, probably old Joe himself—so it proved.

"So it's you, gal, is it?" said aunt Dorothy.

"Ah, it is Hetty!" said the widow.

"Yes," said the blind girl. "I've been round a little."

"Ah! Hetty," said the widow, "remember the words of the Saviour—'I was hungered and ye gave me meat; thirsty and yet gave me drink; naked and ye clothed me.'"

"I have often heard them," said she in reply, "and I wish I could do more as they bid me."

"The Lord bless you, gal, for the good that's in your soul," said the old woman.

"Drum, drum, drum ; dro, dro, dro, de-dro;  
Life is the time to serve the Lord ——"

"Have you seen old Joe this morning, Miss Hetty?" inquired the widow.

"Yes, I have just been to him with a little breakfast. *He is old, and seems to be lame and stiff and sore ——*"

"Seems so, gal! Your father's almost ——"

"Hush! aunt Dorothy," said the widow, laying her hand suddenly on her mouth. And in a lower tone she added—"Don't hurt the poor girl's feelings."

The old woman raised for a moment her flashing eyes, but the fury in them softened as they met those of the pious widow, and fell on the delicate form of the young girl before her, so nearly blind, yet smiling kindly through her tears.

"What were you about to say of my father, aunt Dorothy?" she asked.

"Nothing! nothing, gal," she answered, "only he's not got your gal's heart in him."

"That's true of a great many men," said the widow, softly.

"I'll swear to that!" quickly chimed in the old woman. "There's a score of them to one who've just no heart at all, and old Joe might die for it afore he'd get much pity from ——"

Here again the widow pressed her finger on the old woman's mouth, who gulped down the remainder of the sentence, and the blind girl was left in doubt of her meaning, or in perfect ignorance of it.

"I hope you think old Joe is better now," said the widow to Hetty.

"Yes, he says he is, and he ate my breakfast with a good appetite."

"You've done him a mercy, Miss Hetty, and the Bible says, that he who gives a cup of water to a disciple, in the name of the Lord, shall not lose his reward."

"That's a great promise for so small a favor," said the girl.

"And it's a great Saviour, Hetty, who gives it, remember."

"I know—I know, you always told me so."

"Yes, don't forget him."

"Is Joe a disciple?" inquired aunt Dorothy, humming her tones, and saying, "'Blest be the tie that binds.'"

"Joe's a poor, innocent sort of a body, a sufferer any way," said the widow, and perhaps the Saviour meant him."

"P'raps so," said aunt Dorothy. "Wall, good-bye, gal ; we're going to try to climb these old rotten stairs to see him—old Mrs. Prescott and I ; may be's we can get some comfort in his soul—from the Bible. Mrs. Prescott, come along—the old stairs won't break down, I guess, though it wouldn't hurt them much, if Cap'n Bunce would make a new sett."

Blind Hetty went off, and escaped hearing the last of the sentence, which might have wounded her.

On a wretched bed, with scarcely clothes to cover him, unshaven, uncombed, unwashed, in an unfinished part of the loft, they found the object of their search. Shall we say the dying man? Yes, truly, Joe was dying. He was feeble and aged ; and the cold nights coming on, combined with rougher usage of late than usual, and poor Joe was "getting down" fast. Nobody knew this, least of all did he know it. As for the Captain, he had often seen the paupers sick and feeble, near death, and quite dead ; he had also seen them low, and unaccountably weak, but up they came, and were smart again, so that he could not tell "for the life of him" how it would go with any of them when a little sick or ailing ; but finding that Joe did not "rally," and having some idea that he might have been instrumental in "upsetting" him, as he termed Joe's illness, he sent word to the doctor to "call round in the course of the day."

Mother Prescott and the old woman approached the bed very quietly on which the sick man lay. The kind little visit and the nourishing breakfast of Hetty, had really given him much relief. The old man raised his eyes on the new comers, and seeing the pious old widow one of them, he immediately smiled and put out his withered and trembling hand towards her.

But before we advance further with this interview, we desire to introduce the reader a little more plainly to the poor-house itself, and some of its immediate collaterals and surroundings, so we shall see where the paupers live.

## CHAPTER II.

In preparing Statistics of the Population, and tables on Political Economy, we should pay especial attention to what appears on the Surface. As there may have been other persons alive in our places, now below the surface, so there may once have been other mansions where now are found but such as these.

You have seen the palaces, and the marble and elegant brown-stone front houses of the rich, and large, tight, handsome farm-houses, and gentlemen's cottages in city and country, but have you ever seen one of our moral poor-houses, where the paupers live? Here then is one. It is THE POOR-HOUSE OF CRAMPTON, a New England town, of three or four thousand inhabitants, an old ruined edifice, having an antique but not an attractive or original model, as it is simply a low one story house with a high, sharp roof. It represents peculiarities common to many an old house. It has been painted, and painted red, perhaps twice or three times painted ; but this was a long time ago, and indeed it was a long time ago that any mere casual observer would notice it had ever been thus treated and protected. Once it was a snug, tight, warm, dry dwelling house, full of busy, happy children, the home of some souls now gone to their rest. But it is now an open, cold, decayed affair, shaking and rattling in the winds, and has served as a shelter for swine and cattle, a home of bats, mice, fowls. The shingles are decayed, some are all gone, others very loose, and mould-covered. The wind and storms easily *displace them, so that of course the roof is no longer*

water-tight and rain-proof, and the apartments it covers are seldom otherwise than wet, or damp all round when it rains or the snows melt. But in this case it sometimes happens, as it not unfrequently does in leaky houses, that in one rain, this part of a room drips water, and in another that. Thus the furniture in these rooms acquired a great facility of locomotion, the chairs and beds where these necessary articles of domestic life abounded, moving here and there according to the exigences of the case, with little difficulty in worn and well-smoothed grooves. Good doors, tight clapboards, sound windows once belonged to the house, but now the doors are old and warped, hanging out of true, flaky, creaking on their hinges, swinging over decayed, loose or absent thresholds. The clapboards here and there drop an end for want of a nail. The windows show many a broken pane, many a place filled with rags and papers, or perchance an old weather-beaten hat. The old, ruined, wide-picket fence in front, racked this way and that, the posts being eaten off, and the upper portion settled down into their soft, decayed parts, and wrapt around by the heaving earth and the rank grass and vines, one bracing this and another that way, contrives, nobody ever knew how a fence like this could do so, to hold up against every sort of gale, year in and year out. So the old chimney stands, though now and then an ancient-looking, blackened brick, that has been poising long on the edge of the crumbling pile, falls with a startling sound on the old roof, and half slides off to the ground.

The interior of this house has, it is true, the advantage of the outside covering, be the same more or less, but then there are *not wanting disadvantages* of its own, that *may be fairly said to compensate* for that superiority.



The apartments immediately under the roof, for example, are low, damp, as we have said, the ceiling grim cracked, or fallen ; the walls untidy, heavy lines of discoloration sweep over them in all directions ; modest white-washing they "ignore," as we use a term ; as paper-hangings, *alias* wall-paper, well moistened with gum-solvents or paste, have no affinity or adhesiveness for walls already too moist from outside causes. All sorts of ugly pictures, therefore, such as grim, horrible faces of giants ; distant and uncertain landscapes ; monsters of the animal creation ; dark and foreboding storm clouds ; yawning chasms, and far-extending, crooked and lawless rivers, paint themselves on the walls before you. The floors creak under your tread, and are full of yawning seams, and these are choked with filth seldom thoroughly brushed away. These rooms, almost never washed and scoured, old, decayed, and rat-eaten, are musty with age and bad use. The rooms, moreover, boast not of solid partitions ; but the apartments are separated one from the other by boards poorly matched or gaping wide, and so with hingeless doors, are as unsafe hiding-places of secret things, as uncomfortable retirements of innocence for sleep, meditation, prayer or of fatigue for rest, of sickness for quiet, of old age for death. Thus uninviting are the three or four chambers under the roof of the poor-house, the most direct way to which is by a very rickety, worn, unsafe flight of stairs, with here and there a step partly or entirely missing. And in these so-called rooms, the furniture, if of varied style, is of little varied value. Here a crazy nine-penny chair, and there an antiquated, long out-of-date bedstead, the worse for wear, but wearing *little worse* by longer use, rough, creaking, dangerous. A greasy, worn sack of straw partially conceals its knots

cord, that makes no promise safely to bear one through the night. Tattered and foul bedding, and sparse at that, lies twisted together there ; happy he who feels no need of seeing it unwound. In one apartment, an appearance of a chest meets the eye ; in another, a poor, miserably cheap table ; a piece of mirror rests on the window sash, and a comb with two or three generations of hair combings and aggregations of all sorts, even nameless aggregations ; and broken, brown, glazed earthen ware, of short supply—these make up the furniture—these are all, or so nearly all, that it is not worth the time nor ink to write the balance. Carpets ? None whatever. Rockers, soft and easy ? None. Lounges ? No. Paintings and statuettes ? All wanting. Rose-wood, mahogany, cherry, even stained bureaux ? They are not here. Nor are there downy beds, with full, luxuriant pillow, and sheets of purest white, curtains and mirrors, and “balm of a thousand flowers,” and costly apparatus for queenly toilette. No! no! no! These are in queen’s houses, and in the courts and halls of the great. There is nothing here of beauty, taste or convenience ; nothing beyond the simplest calls of necessity. That is the law of these rooms. A dollar would buy all we have shown you. No auctioneer would strike them down but on a special commission.

On these old creaking beds, many a half-starved, ruined, desperate, lost soul has stretched himself for the last time, and quickly given up the ghost, little effort it may be making, or (being made by others) to hinder life’s last throbbing in him.

Descending by these trembling stairs to the large, open kitchen, with its low, dark walls, blackened by the smoke of years from the great fire-place, whose wide and ugly flue refuses to float off the heavy waste .

sputtering fires beneath it ; and blackened by constant adhesions of direful, nauseating clouds of smoke from pipes well filled with coarsest product of the old Dominion's staple—found in the street, begged here and there, or stolen, as the case might chance, which poor and forsaken wretches, tenants of these quarters, men and women, used to while away the hours, and misery make, if not merry, less miserable ; and blackened by its darkened windows, stained by no magic art of pencil, but by the common law of unwashed glass ; and blackened by its own reflections, every object in it dark and gloomy—even the countenance divine of men and women moving there from place to place—you are in the great common room of the poor-house, where the people throng by day, and where they often rest by night.

Here are the same styles of broken windows, worn and feeble chairs and tables, shattered walls and gaping doors elsewhere on the premises discoverable. And in one corner of the room there is a stout, common, grindy looking bedstead, where some of the tenants fling themselves if the few chairs and benches are occupied by others, or it is the refuge of the weary, the sullen, the sick, or intemperate—a miserable refuge—a very poor, ugly bed.

By a large, wide door on the end of the building, egress and ingress to and from this apartment takes place. Then there is the so-called parlor, and front south room, and the north bed-room, rooms once very aptly thus denominated, and put to use in manner corresponding. But now these same apartments are only caricatures of those specifications, haggard dormitories now they are, for haggard beings, otherwise minus dormitories altogether. And all these rooms are, as to *cleanliness, furniture, comfort*, about as marked and at-

tractive as those already spoken of. The doors of more than one of these apartments are altogether missing—perhaps in some great necessity of fuel, they were “cast into the fire;” others may want a panel, or a hinge, or latch or key and other fastening, so yielding little protection from outsiders, and giving little place of secrecy.

By twos, threes, fours and sixes, the wasted, ill-sorted, and trembling wretches of this New England poor-house were wont to huddle together in these rooms which we have thus imperfectly described. They were never certain of their respective couches, although certain always if sleep o’ertook them, and the light of day awoke them, to arise, gaunt, hungry, cold, and miserable.

But why should they complain of what was charitably given them by their fellow men, and, especially, when to complain would prove them unmindful of their mercies, and fail to soften the hardship? A labor, this, extravagantly useless.

In respect to raiment, the Crampton paupers enjoyed a monopoly of one in many. Their daily, holiday, and Sunday garments were the same. It made no difference with them what saint’s day or jubilee or holiday came round; their garments were always ready for the occasion. You would know a pauper by his raiment as certainly as a state-prison fugitive. It was law at the poor-house to wear out their changes of attire—to wear them to the last shreds, beyond the shiny thread-bare surface, and the treble patch, and many-colored piecing—to put them clear through, and then resign them with regret. And they wandered here and there, with and without hats, slouching and broken; bonnets flaring and faded; in worn, large, cast-away shoes and boots, in very awkward and misfitting covering throughout—wandered about idle, *vagrant, mournful relics*, many—yea, most of them.

of better days—prominent candidates for a hastily dug, hastily filled, and an unmarked grave.

Such were the white and black paupers of Crampton ; a good town of New England ; a land of religion, learning, and refinement ; a place of thrift, charity, and improvement.

Yet occasionally it would happen that some forlorn wretch, man or woman, driven into the poor-house by disaster common to many and uncommon to some, with memory of other days yet fresh in him, and love of order yet surviving, would trim both room and bed with such an air of neatness or taste, that, despite all the surroundings of wretchedness and mockery of happiness, there would seem in them much of earthly comfort. And also, among these despairing creatures, sometimes there would be found one who loved the Lord, and who would act the part of reprover unto others in their sins, and to all the miserable and dying be a friend and counsellor. So has Providence ordained that even the wretched and the vile shall receive instruction, warning, persuasion, while they remain on earth, although their condition is unfavorable for the exercises of practical piety, and their wickedness would seem too flagrant for hope.

Mrs. Prescott seemed sent to the poor-house by an over-ruling Hand. Nobody could exactly tell why she was allowed to spend her last days there—so good, pious, charitable as she was and had been ; but there she was. And who knows but she was sent there by the Lord to do good ? There were some creatures in that poor-house who had souls ! They were a squalid, miserable set of beings ; but what they wanted was just what you and I want, and every body else wants—a thorough soul-cleansing.

*So aunt Prescott thought. So aunt Dorothy said and sung.*

## CHAPTER III.

GENTLEMEN who sell their Cattle, Sheep, and Hogs by Auction, so contrive it that the highest bidder gets them: so they realize. When a lot of Paupers is disposed of at Auction, the town so contrives it that the *lowest* bidder gets them: so the town realizes.

LET no one suppose that in this description of the poor-house of Crampton, we mean to say it is the property of that town. Not at all. The only property in it the town claims is, to its temporary occupants, the paupers. These belong to it. They are natives of the town—"town-born," as we say—or long resident citizens, who have acquired what is called a "legal settlement" there. They may also have become residents, and gained a settlement by owning real estate to the value of three hundred and fifty dollars,\* voting, and paying taxes on this and other estate, if other, in possession. Fallen into the arms of Poverty, while legally citizens of a town, the paupers have a claim of support from it, and go to the poor-house. But as we have said, not to the town's house, though the town may, and often does, own a town or poor-house. It is the house of a private individual of the place into whose care the town has confided its paupers for a given period—say a year. *The manner of this conveyance?* That we shall show you as we proceed; it is an important quality in the act, and has much to do with our story. Here, we simply say, the paupers of the town, —be the number more or less, are disposed of at the annual

\* And in some of the New England States one hundred dollars.—AUTHOR.

town meeting when the voters assemble to choose their selectmen and other officers for the year, either at public auction to the—LOWEST BIDDER, or they are more quietly worked off by the selectmen and overseers of the poor, (at the best bargains possible,) at what may be called a private town sale, selling the whole to one individual, or selling, i. e. (if you please,) boarding, or renting, or farming them out in parcels to several individuals, *always at the lowest possible price*, that the town *may feel their support as little as may be!* They are disposed of by the town or its agents in "lots to suit purchasers," or in a body, as it may best suit the town. Free white men, women, and children, educated—once, if not now respectable—voters, tax-payers, the ill-tides of fortune bearing them to the town hall, they are "passed upon" *as paupers*, and sold out—work, wages, food, clothing, body and soul—for the year, the town agreeing to pay so much money to him who will take the risk and do the best he can with it—working them as he likes, clothing them as he deems it pecuniarily safe, and so feeding them likewise ; and in the event of sickness and death, quietly, and at such charges as he deems it wise for him, consigning them to the grave.

The successful bidder for this stock of New England pauper-humanity is usually a citizen of the town, who may be in debt, and wish to free himself therefrom—in itself a laudable desire ; he may be a man of small family, to whom a larger responsibility may not be very irksome ; he may be a large farmer, who can employ the paupers on his grounds ; he may be one who has a large house and little use for it, who, in its wings and garrets, thinks he can accommodate the poor ; or he may be one who owns a long, dark, dilapidated, forsaken tenement, *where his father lived* or his more distant grandfather,

since then used as a storehouse for grain and lumber—a retreat for the fowls and sheep and swine—abandoned, otherwise, long years ago ; but which, by the aid of broom, and shovel, and soap, and nails, the tightening of floor boards, doors and windows, may be deemed a snug quarters for the town's poor !

The reader will understand that this mode of supporting the paupers is a private enterprise—a private risk or speculation—in which the town bears no part, having nothing to hope or fear in it ; these exercises of the mind being altogether confined to the individual speculator. The part which the town has in this transaction is the putting up of the property at sale, to be worked off as a temptation to somebody ; the moral, conscientious, and religious people voting to give him so many good dollars a year, as he, in a fair competition with other bidders, takes the job for, and risks all its possible contingencies and consequences.

The speculator in this sort of chattels sometimes makes the risk a valuable one, and at other times ruinous to himself. It is very much as the man is as to genius, tact, energy, calculation. Remuneration in poor-house tenantry is got by “grinding the faces of the poor” to a considerable degree of sharpness, and by ciphering down the cost of things till they aggregate in ciphers. A man who would remunerate himself in such risks, must be a man of great faith in the ability of paupers to live on almost nothing, to suffer almost every thing, and to be contented with almost any thing !

There is another feature of this private enterprise in human stocks (!) that it may be well simply to mention. It is, that the poor generally fall into the hands of a class of persons, not over scrupulous on conscientious grounds as to the manner of fulfilling their contract with,



the town—a class “hard up” for funds, familiar with profanity, with coarse and vulgar associates ; an orderless mode of life, with crowds of talkers and idlers round them—a class of the more desperate, hardened and intemperate, whose families, wives and children are scolds, rough and overbearing, with whom kind words and gentle demeanor are rare exceptions ; or perchance a class of mere and much-loving money-getters—getters of money “for the last days.” The easy, quiet, well-off families—the gay, the thriving, industrious, conscientious farmers and residents of the town—have no or little rivalry with this class of speculators ; they do not want, they will not bid on it—they care not to take “the risk.”

Accordingly, it is pretty much all one way with the poor—a poor way. Speculators have it all pretty much after their own way—a grinding way.

Every town in New England has (or a modification of it) one of these pauper institutions ; for all New England has its town paupers. In many hundreds of instances at this very day, the town poor are held in the most abject and wretched condition, equaling in every respect all that we say of the Crampton paupers. But we are happy that it is not so in every town. There has been introduced a very great improvement of the system in many localities. Town and county farms, with appropriate dwellings and shops, and a permanent agency to look after the welfare of the poor, have made their state far more comfortable than it once was, and have more nearly allied the institution itself to a benevolent and Christian one, or house of mercy.

Still, there we find the half-clad pauper, the orphan girl, the ignorant boy, the forgotten old member of society and the church. In her old poor-houses are yet

found the representatives of hard fortune, and the Witnesses of Christian Neglect.

"What is to be done with the paupers this year?" inquired Captain Bunce of one of the old selectmen.

"*This* year?"

"Ai."

"Why this year in particular, hey?"

"Because there's a row among some of the folks about disposing them at a fair trade or auction."

"I don't care *that* for the stir-about that's made!" said the other, snapping his thumb and finger in the air. "We shall dispose of them to suit ourselves. Ain't we the town? Han't we got the majority five to one? A putty idea to knuckle to A., B., and C. to suit their consciences. No, sir! The town is poor, and must look out for itself. Sell the paupers, I say, to the lowest man; and *that* man, I see, Captain, is just yourself. Ha! ha! Ai, Captain? Eh?"

## CHAPTER IV.

CAPTAIN Isaac Bunce, Mrs. Bunce, all the Bunces, more especially the Captain, who has a moral and religious standard. His merciful convictions have a triumphal ascendancy over his daily overt practice, and rule him uncommonly well disposed.

IN the old weather-beaten and comfortless edifice we have described standing plump up by the stage-road in the valley of the great Slip-Slop Creek, with a ridge of high hills close in the rear, and long, rolling mounds and some hills in front, and wide-spreading farms to the south and east, were gathered the paupers of the town of Crampton, numbering about fifteen persons. Besides these, there were a few other individuals in the town not yet absolutely needy, living at present with friends or relatives, receiving each a small allowance, say from two to five dollars a year, which was paid by the town to their friends who took care of them, and in consideration whereof they furnished them a little more kindly an abode at their own homes, but usually "homes" that another death in the family, another paralysis, a foreclosure of a mortgage, or possibly the next twelve-month ebbings of compassion, would entirely break up—happily for the town if it did not add two instead of one to the number of its actual paupers.

This poor-house, a sort of half-habitable looking edifice, overshadowed by the old apple trees of the orchard that had grown strong, great heavy trees, some of them fifty, *sixty, or even seventy* years old, an orchard of them in

the rear where the swine rooted, the geese gabbled, the calves and lambs frolicked, the horses rolled, and bullocks pawed the earth and bellowed, large famous old trees with their roots wound among the rocks, and their arms stretching far out, here and there intertwining, and among them hens and turkies finding safe refuge from nightly prowling foxes. Sometimes, from its enormous, ruined chimney lazily rolled off the smoke indicating life within ; at other times, in the warm summer, its windows were thrown open, and human faces thrust themselves out into human view ; and again, its crazy front door, beneath the old untrimmed lilacs, (where was there ever an old country ruin that had no lilac bushes at its portals?) was swung wide on its rusty hinges ; and perchance two or three human beings filled the entrance, or lounged lazily on its threshold. Near the east end of the house a babbling and rapid rivulet passed, that came off the hills and through the woods, a clear sparkling stream tumbling over the rocks and gurgling through the walls and meandering through the pastures and meadows to the Slip-Slop Creek. The water was pure, soft, abundant, one of the natural blessings of the poor. They sometimes washed their clothes in it, and occasionally their faces, hands, and feet.

Another large, red, two-story, sharp-roofed house, no wise trim and neat, and comfortable looking and attractive, stood within hailing distance on the north side of the poor-house. This, with its wide drive-way to the yard and sheds, and huge barn in the rear, was the dwelling-house of Captain Isaac Bunce, owner of the poor-house and keeper of the paupers. Separated from the poor-house by a high board fence, yet communicating with it through a gate, it represented property, bustling activity, and *independence*. In the wide yard around

the house there were sheds—a long, low line of dark sheds for housing wood, for sheltering wagons and carts, for storing ploughs, and barrows, and scrapers, and all the utensils and apparatus of the farm. And the yard was filled with wood, chips, old fence rails, broken ploughs, carts, and other instruments, utensils, and implements of work-life, gone somewhat or totally to decay. And there were sheds around the barn, flanking it on this side and that, where the uneasy, wandering cattle lounged, going in and coming out as they listed, or the stiffer horn of some old ox made moving less a choice than a necessity. And here too were the poultry and the calves, and the sheep and lambs.

In this broad yard, the paupers, if any were active and able-bodied, were “held to service,” some in making, others in gathering chips, others still in sentinel duty watching the romping pigs and calves. Of the females, work of various kinds was oft demanded in the house, mopping, scrubbing, washing clothes, making beds, sweeping, etc. Half of every sunny day there might be seen here and there crouched down on the warm side of a shed, or a wood-pile, among loose barrels, or cart-wheels, or perchance stretched out on a pile of boards, or rails, some feeble, aged person, almost done with earth, yet yearning for its warmth and sunshine ; or sad and melancholy and drooping human forms passed here and there on the grounds—high and hilarious shoutings, voices in merry story tellings and railleries, laughter that maketh glad the hearts from the large dwelling where were busy women, or jovial men, reposing from work or cheerful from wine, falling on their ears, not as shoutings and voices and laughter of encouragement, not as from circles of loving children, not as sympathetic *with sorrow and friendlessness*, nor as attracting to its

circle the lonely and broken-hearted—not as these, oh! no, no.

Men and women shouted there over their own free jests, in forgetfulness of the sorrow that was weighing down the poor.

For five successive years Captain Bunce had kept the poor of Crampton; it seeming to be the opinion of a majority of the town that his terms were easier for them than any that others proposed, and his accommodations, *on the whole*, the best for the poor that could be had. It is true that some of the citizens of Crampton were disinclined to go with the majority, and urged a different mode and system of supporting the poor. They were, however, a small minority, and by most regarded and treated derisively, as fanatics or squanderers of the town treasury, or possibly with patronizing civility. Other individuals there were who had a strong desire for a portion of the “loaves and fishes”—i. e., to share the spoils in the disposition of the poor at a cash valuation. Hence they were competitors for the job, risk, or duty, with the Captain and with one another.

But party politics, diplomatic shrewdness, lobby button-pulling, and the wishes of the majority all favored the Captain, and his bids prevailed.

In person, Captain Bunce was a large, florid-looking man, nearly six feet in height, with broad shoulders, long, stout arms, and hard hands. He was careless of dress, rough and ready in his manners. He was not usually and wantonly profane, but easily and often fell into the practice. In his orders, he was rather loud and dictatorial; swaggering in his talk; always making a good story better by recapitulation; professing great familiarity with the details of all sorts of business; a *knowledge of the value of property, real and personal*;

a positive love of hard work for work's sake ; and an acquaintance with human nature that enabled him to draw out of every body around him more work than any other man under the same circumstances.

Notwithstanding he seemed always well supplied with funds, he was one of a class ever in debt. His bills against the town had been sometimes as high as eight hundred dollars a year ; but competition is the ruin of high prices, and it had run the Captain down to six hundred—an income still that his rivals deemed almost the same as clear gain, and that he also did not under-rate in his own bosom's thoughts. None knew better than he that the ready first cost of provisions for the paupers simply, was very trifling. It was absolutely and scripturally necessary that the Captain should provide for his own household ; and as this was rather large, a little over—a very little extra supply of provisions—would make an abundance of fare “ for all the poor folks that Crampton ever got together”—i. e., from the over-plus, *ibid* the leavings. Hence, from a certain point of necessary charges any way, (the Captain figured it,) the paupers' food would be about the same to him in the actual deficit of his ways and means, as the true value of two decimals themselves in a fractional place where the units and tens were wanting, and the whole representing—a cipher !

Although the nominal guardian of the poor of the town, which implied some benevolence of feeling, he really “cared not for the poor,” except in so far as he carried “the bag” by which they, in being supported, supported him. As with every other individual who, at any given time, had been put in charge of the paupers, it was for the sake of making money he kept them a single day. *Boasting of his benevolence, and of a merciful and*

humane treatment of his poor dependents, the treatment after all was such as the weight of "the bag" demonstrated expedient. Of course!

The Captain farmed a good many acres, heavily under mortgage; and as far as they were able, sometimes exceeding their ability, he compelled the paupers to lend him their assistance. He held this to be a proof of his humanity and benevolence, inasmuch as they being somewhat in years; somewhat stiff and cold; somewhat decrepid; the blood sluggish and low, with little ambition or motive to execution, they were greatly inclined to inaction, and to a dull, monotonous, sleepy sort of life, the indulgence of which was bad—very; productive of distempers, fevers, agues, and that sort. He would frequently, therefore, counsel them to "stir" themselves, to "take the air," to "shake off melancholy," and "drowsiness," and "gloomy recollections" of the past.

"It is better for you," said he, "better for you 'by half,' to be busy at some close, steady employment, from morning till night, than to sit here moping."

With this merciful and humane view of his duty, Captain Bunce "stirred" up the poor-house community every day with directions to do this and that job of work, to hire which done would have been expensive, and altogether useless with so much unemployed material on hand—his good intentions sometimes failing, it is true, and the benefit coming short, as the individuals in question, and that not unfrequently, were found more feeble in body than the given employment contemplated, peradventure actually on the sick list, a bed. But sickness and disappointment are human inconveniences.

This mercy in the direction the Captain gave it, filled a very large field—an almost boundless one. It contributed *very much, in his opinion*, to realize a joyful *reunion of both ends of the financial year*, and thus secure



to the paupers themselves the continuous advantages of his roomy and desirable quarters for their home. We ought not to forget it, and will say while it is in mind, that Captain Bunce was by his *works* a religious man. He attended church, rented a good slip, and when any of the paupers died he sent word religiously and promptly to the minister to lose no time in attending the funeral obsequies. Perhaps there was not one man in the town who entertained a more vivid conception of his own personal integrity, independence, morality, mercy, humanity, diligence, thrift, popularity with all classes of citizens, and reverence for religion than Captain Bunce.

But standards of personal excellence are seldom lived up to, and still more rare is it that we see them exceeded. This was the case with the Captain. He formed, notwithstanding every good thing about him, no exception to the rule—certainly he did no more than equal his. Disguise the matter as he would in his own eye, to others it was palpable that he wore a rum face, managed his affairs loosely, blustered and stewed and swagged, instead of diligently and successfully minding his proper business, while his humanity and mercy, as well as all the moral qualities of which he boasted a large surplus, were in reality satellites of his extreme selfishness. A very great and wide difference of opinion this, from that which he entertained, and teaching all of us not to think more highly of ourselves than we *ought*!

However, Captain Bunce had a great many mouths to feed ; and this was a trial of his disposition—of his moral qualities not only, but of his calculations—his mental qualities. He seemed to have imposed on him directly, a double share of trial, and this required in him all the virtues that, in a hasty enumeration of personal *qualities*, he accorded to himself.

*Annually on the town books of Crampton—a town of*

three or four thousand persons—there was a good average of fifteen paupers. This number, in full, now looked up to Captain Bunce every day of their successive three hundred and sixty-five, for all they had !

In the Bunce family proper, beside the Captain, there was Mrs. Bunce. She was a stout, healthy woman, and the mother of four living children grown up, viz. : Dick and Elisha, Betsey and Henrietta ; and beside these, there was a hired man and a servant girl. These were the mouths to feed daily, and the Captain was put hard up to meet the demand ; but his heart did not fail him at all as long as brandy and water could be had, and six or seven hundred dollars a year for the paupers found their way to his pockets.

And yet, sublunary calculations and sublunary possessions are closely allied to sublunary disappointments ; and the Captain himself could not escape the operation of their causes and effects. The town paupers were beginning to slip through his fingers, and his farm and all that he possessed through his hands. For Mrs. Bunce, though a stout, healthy woman in the common use of language, was rather a red-faced woman, and fond of cider, ale, wine, and all the minor beverages proper for a woman to be fond of ; and the two Bunce boys, Dick and Elisha, had a fondness for brandy and cigars ; and Dick, the elder, had a cough similar to one that carried off his elder brother Hallowell. Betsey Bunce was a coarse sort of a girl, strong for service—a stout, noisy, bold girl, engaged to marry Sam Durkee, the butcher. Henrietta, the youngest child, was now seventeen—a sweet-tempered, pale, good girl, gentle and kind, but unfortunately, nearly blind. When ten years of age, she lost an eye by the carelessness of her brother Elisha, *then twelve years old*. The boy held in his hand a *large bow and arrow*, and was showing Hetty his ski

in shooting. At length, pointing his arrow in mere play at his sister, with the bow drawn tightly up, by accident the arrow escaped, and struck the right eye of the poor child, and destroyed it. The nerve of the other was so much affected through sympathy, that she was nearly blind ever after. She could, however, read a little, sew a little, knit, and do errands and light work about house. But Hetty was a child of misfortune ; and it seemed as if her days would be few on earth, and that she would always be a source of anxiety, trouble, and expense to her parents—one, indeed, on whom they could place no reliance for help in the times of their own distress. Parents often say of lame Willie and blind Hetty, “ we can’t expect from them any help or comfort : alas ! what a misfortune to us and them.” This is, fortunately, a great mistake. Lame Willie and blind Hetty often are lamed and blinded by Heaven for us.

It was into the care of Captain Isaac Bunce and his amiable family that the poor of Crampton were confided by the authorities. They placed them with him mainly on these two considerations—*First*, That he had bid for them lower than any other of the respectable, moral and humane citizens of the town. *Second*, Because he was deemed responsible to fulfil his contract. They did not ask him where or how he would keep them, “ provided always ” that they were “ *suitably* ” kept, and in such a manner as “ to save the town harmless ” of any further cost than what the contract specified. Of this they were morally certain that neither he nor any other of the citizens of Crampton could be expected to keep them in his own house unless perfectly convenient, and absolutely necessary for the want of other accommodations. Nor would he of course keep them in the same *rooms and beds* that he appropriated to his own family, *and the relatives* and occasional visitors of the family.

The stipulation was not of this sort, although the tender mercies of the town authorities were so actively in exercise that they contracted in the name of mercy and justice, which sometimes go sweetly together, of humanity and religion, (which sometimes have kissed each other,) such at least as Captain Bunce immortalized in his daily practice towards the paupers, for the "*suitable*" keeping of the unfortunates in his charge. "*Suitable*" keeping of town paupers means, in a manner that hardly any other human being would endure, i. e., in a very unsuitable way for persons who have money and are respectably, well off. This done, for example, by Captain Bunce, and the town authorities, unless sent for, rarely visited the quarters of the poor, nor tarried long when they did. Captain Bunce courted no investigation of his private practice of town officials, nor did he care especially that curious, prying, jealous eyes should examine his premises, and spy out his management. Feeling wholly competent to manage his own concerns, what possible advantage was it to him that one and another person of the town should visit his "works" and volunteer advice? The overseers rather liked this independent spirit, and the town as a whole, felicitated itself in having the right sort of a man to take on his shoulders the *whole charge* of the pauper family. Seldom do we find two separate interests so nicely balanced as were these of the town and of Captain Bunce, and working so harmoniously to a common end.

As our friend the Captain did not intend to keep, shelter, feed and clothe the paupers in his own house, "where," it may be asked by some, "where did he intend to keep them?" To be sure, in the poor-house, so-called, or rather in the old house we have described, *and which, a great while ago, had been inhabited by the*

ancestors of the Bunce family, thus making the genealogical structure itself one of uncommon respectability.

"Why," said Captain Bunce, "my father was born in this very house ! Yes, indeed, he was. And my grandfather lived here forty years. It is a most venerable, remarkable, extraordinary old house."

"It is indeed," said Bill, the colored man, "it is as old as the hills."

But the true character of such old forsaken tenements, the floor of the kitchen over the cellar trembling with its own weight, who does not know ?

Here then the poor folks of Crampton had their home. They were not confined there as to a penitentiary or jail. They roamed about here and there, making neighborhood excursions, went to the Captain's kitchen and barn, were sent of errands, worked in the fields, etc., and occasionally some of them went away to beg or steal, or in idle curiosity roved off and were gone some days. But whatever they did, wheresoever they roamed, they never arose out of their condition of paupers, dependent, broken down, forgotten, doomed paupers ! They never found themselves in a situation that did not forcibly remind them of their poverty, that great ill of human life, that cause of much sinning, that blight on human happiness and hope, that dimmer even of heaven's own glorious light. Their rooms, their raiment, their food, their means of enjoyment, their field of industry, their circle of friends and associates, the prayers and exhortations to which they listened, the portions of the gospel selected for their benefit, all, *all* reminded them that they were the poverty-stricken ones of the earth ; that their fellow-men regarded them as useless, thriftless, wasteful consumers, with but one scene in the play of *life unacted, viz.—the death scene !*

## CHAPTER V.

JOE HARNDEN and his visitors. When visits and calls are made they should be civil and short. Do not bore a friend to death by the length of your civility, but cut it short off before he shall even begin to wish you hadn't called at all.

"AND how do you feel to-day, Mr. Harnden?" said the pious old widow with a very kind tone of voice, and taking him by his extended hand.

"Joe's very sick," said he, "very sick, Mrs. Prescott, but he's on the mending order now, and will be up again by to-morrow or next day."

"They that sow in tears shall reap in joy, you know," said she. "That's a precious word of consolation, Joe. It means that if we have some troubles and sorrows here, we shall get the better of them hereafter, in the help of the Lord."

"My troubles, Mrs. Prescott," said the old man, "my troubles have come on me by my own doing, and it sort of strikes me that the Bible comfort isn't meant of such sinners; it's meant for better sort of persons than deserve to die in the poor-house."

"Oh! la sus, Joe," said the old woman Brinsmade, "then what's the chance for me and half of us? Ye see, Joe, we must all consider there's *some* hope. Now your'n, and mine, may be's small. But—*drum, drum, drum*—a little's better than none at all—ain't it so—Miss Prescott?"

"The Saviour of the world says, 'I am come to seek *and to save them that are lost.*' 'I come not to call the

righteous, but sinners to repentance.' 'Go ye out into the highways and hedges and compel them to come in, (meaning poor folks, you know? "Yes," said aunt Dorothy,) that my house may be filled.'"

"And do you really reckon, Mrs. Prescott," inquired the sick man, "that a poor fellow like me, or any body like us, might have been meant by that sort of merciful language?"

"Oh, I know it, Joe! It is all a perfect revelation of pity, the gospel—meant for the greatest of all sufferers, poor, and ignorant, and dying."

"Wall, I'll be hanged if I don't wish it might be true," he replied, wiping a tear from his eye.

"Oh, it's all true, Joe," said aunt Dorothy, "I'm a firm believer in it, and it'll do you a heap of good to believe it too."

"Yes," said the widow, "a great deal, for we read, 'He will wipe away all tears from their eyes, neither shall there be any more sorrow nor pain, and they shall be forever with the Lord, and your sins and iniquities will I remember no more forever.'"

"That's a very good, and seems like a gracious promise," said the poor creature.

"Oh, it is, it has a great deal of comfort in it."

"I've been a great rebel sinner," said the man, "a swearer, a drinker, gambler, and all that's bad; but of late years I've thought on my ways some, and getting old I've left off some of my bad ways, but not from an understanding mind. Now I think I see where the truth is, if I can only get hold of it."

"You do, you can, sartain," said aunt Dorothy, "it is as plain as daylight. Don't put it off."

*"If you cast yourself on the Saviour for salvation, and do not cling to your own righteousness—"*

"No, I throw that away, it's about as good as these bed-quilts—"

"A hit, I s——!" cried aunt Dorothy, throwing her hands into the air in a perfect transport of feeling.

"Mercy on us! What do you mean, aunt Dorothy, to talk so?" said the offended widow, and the old dying Joe rolled his eyes on her mournfully enough.

"Well, it's no use fretting," said she, "I only spoke in earnest, not in wickedness, so help me ——; ah! now, I say, Joe, we are mighty glad you've got rid of your own righteousness, and begin to see the right sort—*drum, drum, drum.*"

"Joe," said the widow, stooping down to his pillow, and speaking in a low voice, "the Saviour says, 'He that cometh unto me shall in no wise be cast out.' Now you must turn your mind to him and believe on him as your own suffering Saviour, dying on the tree, to save you. Then you must try to repent of all your sins, and cast yourself just as you are, by faith, upon the Lord. He'll accept you then, and it'll be just like the Prodigal Son going home to his father. Do you understand?"

"Yes, I think I do, a little," said he.

"'Ask and ye shall receive, seek and ye shall find, knock and it shall be opened unto you.'"

After a few moments the invalid raised his eyes to her's and said, "It seems to me, if I could only pray—but it's of little use to think of it—I don't know how to. Can anybody pray for old Joe in his time of need?"

"Yes," said she, "I'll pray for you myself. Aunt Dorothy, let us kneel down and pray for him. He's feeling the need of it, I know."

Aunt Dorothy required no second asking, and then they *kneeled down their aged limbs, poor, helpless sinners as they were, and while Joe shut his eyes and*



moaned a true, penitent groan, the pious old lady offered her humble and earnest petition to the Saviour in his behalf. She was a praying saint, doubtless, and many an old pauper under that roof had heard her prayers in similar circumstances, and acknowledged her great kindness. So the good widow, even in her old age and weakness, was helpful to the poor ones there, in guiding them out of their dark and sinful paths into the light and pleasant ways of the Lord.

Poor Joe had been a merchant. But the reverses of fortune and the allurements of the cup, long ago impoverished him, and without a living relative near enough of kin to care for him, he became a pauper, shattered and weak of intellect, and a miserable wreck of humanity every way—a great change indeed from the gay and active young man of business, Mr. Joseph Harnden, of New York, merchant in Broadway. So it is with the poor of the north frequently. They are men who have been in a far better condition, and to all appearances, far enough from the poor-house. But no man knows what is before him in life, especially if he be addicted to any vice. It is very certain that even yet many a proud speculator, many a lady in silks, many a blushing maiden, many a hard-working laborer, will end his days among the paupers, as poor and miserable as any of—whom we are now writing—because every antecedent cause of poverty, extravagance, intemperance, pride, licentiousness, dishonesty, anger, revenge, hatred, violence, sickness, pestilence, conflagration and famine, now preys on the vitals of society very much as it has hitherto done.

But we return to poor dying Harnden. The prayers *and exhortations* of the aged widow, good, old, pious, *heaven-minded saint*, seemed to have a very happy effect

on his mind, and he said that whether he "dropped off" or "came up," he hoped it would be well with him; and in this most heartily joined aunt Dorothy, whose goodness was of that uncertain, impulsive nature, that neither she nor any one else knew in what direction her mind and heart would drive her. She went with the circumstances around her, now religiously inclined, and anon moving on with the world. Her's was not the best model of piety, but as her pretensions were not very high, her influence was correspondingly trifling. Joe Harnden, notwithstanding his mind was weak, gave what he had apparently with a full heart to the Lord, and rejoiced in the promise of the gospel.

"There is one thing I want to know, Joe Harnden," said aunt Dorothy, "and that is, if old Cap'n Bunce didn't hit you a hard kick in the back that made you lame?"

"Cap'n Bunce did not kick me——"

"He did, you lie, Joe Harnden! You know he did." This was uttered so quickly that the widow could not prevent it. Joe groaned on his bed, and tears trickled down his cheek. The old woman began her

"Drum, drum, drum,  
Behold the aged sinner goes—  
Drum, drum, drum, dro, dri, dro, dri,  
Laden with guilt and——  
Drum, drum, drum."

"No," said Joe, partly turning in his bed, and fastening his eyes on her, "Cap'n Bunce gave me a punch with his hand, but I told a falsehood when I said he kicked me. If it were the last word I ever uttered, I would say Cap'n Bunce did not kick me."

With his eyes still fastened on her, the old pauper sank back on his couch, a ghastly expression came on

his face, he trembled slightly, gave a dying groan, and as the widow hurried to his relief, drew his last breath.

"Joe!" cried a voice from below : no answer. "*Joe*, I say!" still no answer. "*Joe Harnden*, have you got no ears, I say!"

But no answer was returned ; only widow Prescott, moving on tip-toe to the head of the stairs, beckoned Captain Bunce to come up. Suddenly the Captain felt a shudder creeping all over him, as though something awfully serious had occurred. Stepping softly up three or four stairs towards her, he saw beyond, old aunt Dorothy, standing like a statue, with both hands stretched above her head, and her eyes riveted on the bed. But as the blood began to run cold in his veins, the widow stooped down and whispered through her fingers, "JOE'S GONE!"

"Good heavens! Mrs. Prescott——"

"Just breathed his last!"

The Captain reeled and grew dizzy on the stairs. But directly a voice from the door opening out below, called him to himself."

"Captin Bunce! Captin Bunce! he's come—the doctor's here!"

"Hurry him up, then, for God's sake, Jims! Why in the world haven't you hurried along, hey? Here's old Joe dying, and nobody to bleed him."

"I guess there arn't much blood in him," cried Jim. "More likely his blood's frized up into icicles. I reckon you'd do better to sweat him."

Under ordinary circumstances, Captain Bunce would have knocked the boy down for his impudence ; but now he paid no attention to him. He hurried the doctor up stairs, who approached the bed.

Putting his ear to the mouth of the dead man, and

feeling his pulse carefully for a moment, he turned to the Captain, who stood on the stairs within three or four steps of the top.—“He’s gone,” said he.

“Dead!” exclaimed the Captain.

“As lead,” replied the Doctor. “*He’s done!*”

“Jms!” said the Captain, going down with a very white face, and trembling in spite of himself, “tell the people that Joe Harnden’s dead, and will be buried to-morrow.”

Harnden’s last visitor was death.

## CHAPTER VI.

"We've fifteen poor folks, lacking the last death—Joe Harnden."—*Squire Ben Stout's Remark.* It is well to keep the Population intact, to know exactly what to say when the Government gets in readiness for the National Census. A correct Census is the glory of an Administration.

ONE important personage in Crampton was Benjamin Stout, Esquire—or Squire Ben Stout ; otherwise, and more universally, called Squire Ben. He was always head man in town affairs, and a capital manager of the public interests. Squire Ben was fat and easy. He could smoke, drink ale, and brandy as a slight change. He was a good joker, and a generous, hospitable, gentlemanly liver. First selectman of the town, he wielded a large influence, and enjoyed in that office, as his colleagues and coadjutors, Mr. Jonas Savage and Mr. George Haddock.

Now Stout and Savage went in on the same ticket ; Haddock, on the opposition ticket. Haddock's party was not a large one, though respectable men belonged to it. Policy led the democratic majority, who could make a clean sweep of every thing in Crampton, to put in Haddock. There were some agitating matters always coming up in town affairs, and the minority felt easier and behaved better if they had a voice, even though it were but as one to three or five, in the town business.

In relation to the town paupers, these men were classified thus : Stout and Savage for the town ; Haddock for *the paupers*. Now S. and S. really claimed that they

were for the paupers—i. e., for their best good ; and they put Haddock down as a fanatic. We shall see the ideas which all these gentlemen entertained on the subject, as well as their ideas in general, on morals, education, benevolence, crop out here and there in the progress of our story.

Although differences of opinion were entertained in the town, as to the great question of supporting the poor, and sundry hints were floating here and there that the present manner was wanting in mercy and kindness, and behind the age, yet the town at large was united in sustaining the system, and felt safe as long as Squire Ben and Savage were a majority of the Board. And they said the time had not yet come to alter a policy as old as "seventy-six."

Jonas Savage, though a man of some business talent, was a coarse, bold, swaggering fellow. He was ignorant and overbearing. Really one of those uncultivated men that, while they know a good deal, are sharp, exert an influence, and can't be got rid of, you feel uncomfortable when they are about. Savage made his mark on every thing he took up. The town knew he was trustworthy for them. He went, on all occasions, for "retrenchment." Mr. Savage's idea of town expenses was, that they were always unnecessarily high, and he maintained as his theory, and promulgated the same in loud, long, and windy speeches at town-meetings, that by strict economy at least two per cent. of the taxes might be struck off. Esq. Ben. Stout was for retrenchment, but he also earnestly advocated paying up, and a thorough collecting of the taxes, and liquidating all the town charges. Mr. Haddock was earnest in advocating improvements, and for a tax sufficient to meet every needed reform in the *community, and for such laws and doings as were consistent and honorable.*

The town business requires attention. The selectmen must meet together and talk it up very often. So our Crampton officials often met and discussed the town affairs, town policy, and town interests. They sometimes grew rather heated in argument, especially when the rival views and parties came in decided collision. By appointment, we find the three gentlemen already introduced to the reader, assembled one afternoon at the office of Squire Ben Stout. It happened that Savage arrived a few minutes before Mr. Haddock, and was very warmly greeted by his superior, Squire Ben.

"Did you know," said he, "I was just thinking over the matter—a little—and it struck me, that our last contract for the poor wasn't bad, after all, Savage, eh?"

"I don't know," said the other, rather doggedly.

"Why, you see, you see, Savage ; here it is, *six hundred dollars*—that's all, every cent—it ain't six *fifty*, or *seventy-five*, nor is it seven hundred ! Don't you see the point, eh?"

"Oh ! hang it, Squire, I know all that ; yes, I know it's but six hundred ; and yet I——, *that's* enough !"

Squire Ben drew a long breath as Savage struck his hand smartly on the old law book that lay open on the table before him, and looked him straight in the eye. Finally he said,

"Well, it strikes me we have it about as low as it will bear *this* year, eh ? Isn't it low for the present time, Savage ? Don't it strike you so, eh ?"

"Why, tolerably, tolerably, but I don't think we can ever get it down too low ; the fact is, the taxes are unconscionably high and hard. But if the Captain must have six hundred, we can't help it, I s'pose. They've got to have a living, somehow. They're a trouble, and *an expensive sett* of good-for-nothings. Hang 'em, say I."

"As for me," said the Squire, "I had rather not have the responsibility of contracting for them. The town had better do it at the annual meeting, when they are all there, you know?"

"Altogether," said Savage, "this milk and water way, just to avoid selling them at auction, don't suit me; it's just no way at all. Put them right up in a lot, and down they go to somebody, probably fifty dollars cheaper than when we contract in this manner."

"*It is the best way,*" said the Squire, with firmness unusual. "I go for it with all my heart."

"We could manage it easy enough," said Savage, "if it was not for these croaking fanatics, like Haddock and Phillips. They go so unmercifully for the 'Gospel,' as they call it, that common sense and hard times stand a mighty poor chance, I tell you."

"Ha! ha! ha! Savage, you have struck out the thing just as it is. They *are* queer."

"Queer!"

"Ai; that is, they—are—singular, you see."

"Singular! They are confounded bores and botheration."

Now Squire Ben always got along by carefully picking his way and feeling of men. Savage was blunt, and came right out. He frequently "blew up" the Squire for his caution; and he would have done it now, only the whole current of conversation was changed by the sudden arrival of Haddock himself—a stout, handsome, gentlemanly man—who carried a cane, was easy in his manners, frank and self-possessed. Mr. Haddock knew a good deal of society in general, and of his colleagues in particular. He was judicious withal, and very hard to get up a quarrel with, or to really despise and insult. *As for the Squire, he greeted him very cordially, and made him take his own chair.*



"Yes, of course, friend Haddock, I always do so ; keep it, keep it. We are glad to see you."

"Thank you, sir ; I am glad to return the compliment."

"How *are* you ?" said Savage, reaching out his hand.

"Very well, indeed. How is your own health, sir ?"

"First rate ; sound as a nut," said the second selectman.

"I suppose, gentlemen, you are getting on rapidly with business ?"

"Why, Haddock !" exclaimed the Squire ; "we have done nothing—nothing. We were just looking out for you, hoping you'd be on hand to help us. We are none too many, altogether, to manage this town's affairs. I am getting old and clumsy, Haddock. I can't do much, any how. But you and Savage, now, are just in the prime of life. Yes, yes—well, so it is. But—er—where were we, Savage ? What business were we on when Haddock came in ? Let's see—er—ah ! ai !—I have it ! You see it strikes us, Haddock, in regard to the taxes, that the collector is dilatory, and ought to be pricked up. What do you think ?"

Mr. Haddock wasn't posted up, he said.

"How can we get on with town affairs, if the collector fails to bring in the money ?"

"That is every body's honest opinion," said Savage.

"Now I reckon that whereas we ought to have eighteen hundred dollars, we shall fall short near to seventeen. We want to know about it—must know. We have a world of money to make out. There's the extra expenses, roads to be repaired injured by the great rain, cost of Rundel's old horse that fell through the Little Bear's Bridge, and extra funerals of the paupers that Bunce says the town ought to pay for : all these call for *close* calculation. We can't go headlong any longer.

*We must bring up somewhere ; and I think it is as well to do it now as by-and-bye, when we've got to.'*

"Just so," said Squire Ben. "It won't do to run the town in debt. We must get the town *out* of debt, then we can go on."

"That's it, that's it!" said Savage. "The town won't hear to any extra expenses."

"No, gentlemen, I agree with you," said Mr. Haddock. "The town don't wish a large, heavy bill brought in beyond the money raised. But the town is willing to take just views of its own responsibilities, and guard against future expenses and contingencies, by timely provision. As, for example, it is better that the Little Bear Bridge should be built of stone, with an arch, though it should cost fifty dollars more, than of wood, with string-pieces and plank."

"Well, now, I differ from that idea," said Savage. "The town can't afford to spend fifty dollars here and a hundred there, just for improvements. The Little Bear's Bridge can be put up in good, thorough shape for a hundred and fifty dollars. And who will give a job to the masons, and saddle a bill on the town of two hundred, just to have a stone arch there instead of solid old-fashioned timbers? For my part, I'm satisfied with a plank bridge. It's good enough, if stone *is* better. What do you say, Squire?"

"I should think, on the whole, that the *town* would be afraid—under the circumstances of so *many* extras and abatements—to build of stone. I think we must have the plank bridge, Mr. Haddock, for the town is in honor bound to pay every thing that's lawful, and we must consult for the honor of the town."

"Yes," said Mr. Haddock. "But you recollect the Little Bear Bridge has been swept off twice in five years, besides this wearing out of the plank, while the *Slip-Slop Bridge of stone has stood without any repairs, or a cent of cost, ten years already.*"

"True enough!" said Savage. "But the Slip-Slop cost the town a deal of cash, and made a mighty grumbling. Folks said if town money was to be squandered in that way, every body would have to pawn his farm to pay taxes; so they turned out the selectmen, you know, and put in a new sett."

"That's about as it was, to be sure," said the Squire.

"Yes, and Haddock knows it," said Mr. Savage, "Ha! ha!"

"But that is not the whole of the story," replied he. "I remember that when the '39 freshet swept all the bridges off but the arch-bridge of the Slip-Slop, and cost the town an extra one per cent. tax, every body was satisfied, and said it was money well laid out."

"Oh! that was merely on the excitement of the moment," replied Savage. "The town has never voted any stone bridges since."

"No, nor is it likely to, as long as some of the influential tax payers go dead against it," said Haddock. "But every body knows that it is true economy to do things *well*, when they are done."

"I go in for that," said Squire Ben, "and so does Savage—I dare say—only—that is—Savage is sharp and sees a long way ahead, hey, Savage?"

"Why, as for that, I ain't proud of myself, by no means. But I do hold that a sixpence saved is sixpence earned."

"Ha! ha! ha! I thought so," was the merry reply of the Squire.

"There are two ways to save sixpences," said Mr. Haddock, who very well knew that it was two to one in all the talk of this Board, and consequently kept his temper whatever provocation might seem calculated to *inflame* it. "One other way is so to spend sixpences, *that they will not need spending again very soon.*"

"Oh, pshaw! pshaw! Haddock, you're always for doing things for the town, just as you build your own stone walls. You don't care what money it takes, if the work will only stand. Now towns are different from individuals, you see. A man can do as he pleases with his own matters, but the town must manage just to keep along from year to year—doing the best it can under all the circumstances. Ain't it so, Squire Ben?"

"Rather of—that is—my notion is, something so—something so—yes, a little so," said the Squire, throwing a side glance from the floor to Haddock, and from Haddock to the ceiling, and from the ceiling to Savage, and so resting again on the floor. Now the Squire was a very sensible man, and except in cases where he performed *popular duty*, he was a sort of Haddock-man himself, making every thing substantial and secure. Popular favor! How small a matter this. Yet Squire Ben Stout was too weak to resist it. As for Savage, he gloried in a set of principles that looked to popularity among the people as their great object.

"I brought up the little Bear Bridge," said Haddock, by way, merely, of example. "You don't yield the point there, and probably you won't in the case of the paupers. Now I am of the opinion that we must adopt a more merciful, truly benevolent, thorough, and, *in the end*, more economical way of supporting them. I want you to look at it with your eyes all open, and decide as candid men what we *should* do. Let us decide first on the principle. What is our *duty* to these poor creatures. What can they reasonably *claim* of us. Then we shall come easily, or at least understandingly, to the question of 'ways and means.'"

"You want, Mr. Haddock, that the town should saddle itself with a debt of five thousand dollars or vote a

tax to meet it, just to put these old crazy coots, lying old devils, half of them, into a brick palace, and furnish waiters for them, and pay even something to boot, instead of pursuing the present economical and humane course that we have followed ever since the town had a pauper. How, in the name of reason, can you advocate so preposterous a plan? It's idle, Haddock, perfectly idle. Five thousand dollars! Good heavens! Haddock, why, you're crazy. Do you think, Squire Ben, that Crampton folks will ever come to that, hey?"

"I—— consider that——"

"One minute, Squire, if you please," interrupted Mr. Haddock.

"Let the Squire speak." interrupted Savage, in his turn.

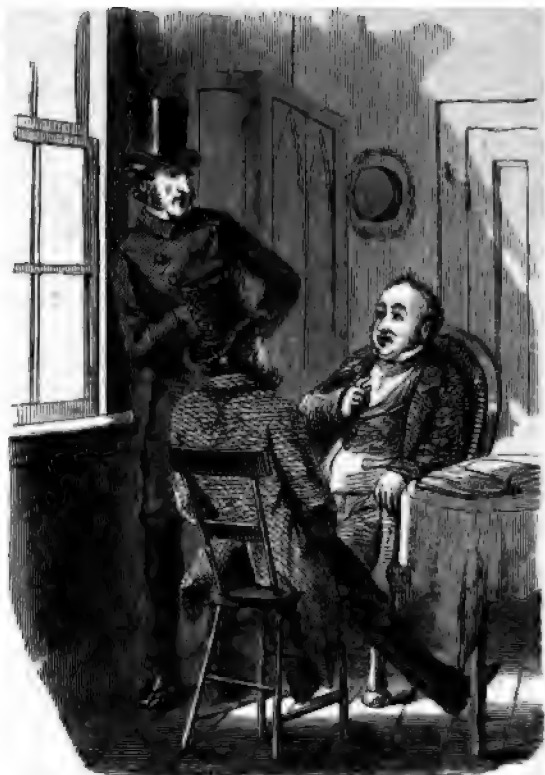
"Oh, to be sure, I only wanted to say——"

"Time enough to say it when Squire Ben's got through. This subject is a confounded bore any way——"

"But we ought not to dodge it—we can't dodge it. I know," said Haddock, "that this town has got a conscience; and I am determined to let the town have all the light I can, to operate on that conscience. We have a system of pauperage that is a disgrace to us. And to defend and to perpetuate it is an outrage."

Haddock was usually mild, but if he was crowded he could storm some as well as Savage; as for Squire Ben, he never stormed. He hesitated to commit himself irretrievably any way—but always went with his party at least in hypothesis. Before Savage could reply, therefore, Squire Ben lifted his right foot from the floor, and resting it on his left knee, leaned forward with a finger pointing towards Haddock, as indicating the *course of his reply*, and an eye resting on Savage (who *was ready with town retrenchment argument to over-*





"You see gentlemen," said the Squire, "the times are hard!"

whelm Haddock) as if *he* were the party to profit by his observations, and said at once—

"The town, Haddock, is one thing, conscience is another thing, and—we know it—we all understand it—the poor another, or a third thing. Now, we must take care of the poor. That's principle—ain't it, Mr. Savage?"

"Sartain," said Savage.

"Just so," said Squire Ben. "We *must* do that thing. And so conscience and principle go together. Now we—don't need, Haddock, any—that is, any considerable—more light on that point you see—for we are all posted up—square up on the point of duty and principle—morals and religion, and so forth. Now the next great question is, *the money!*"

"That's it, that's it, by thunder!" said Savage—"the money."

"Well, there's money enough," said Haddock, "where there's a will."

"But there ain't a will," fiercely said Savage.

"You see, gentlemen," said the Squire, "the times are *hard!*"

"Cursedly hard!" said Savage.

"They are hard on the paupers, I know," said Haddock.

"Well, gentlemen, consider," said the Squire, "that the town must pay as it goes along. Now it is just as much as the voters will come up to, to raise a poor tax of four per cent. That's the most we've ever got; and that gives us eight hundred. Now we've fifteen poor folks, lacking the last death—Joe Harnden—and winter's at hand, when there'll be, probably, four or five more, and some half-pays about town in families. It—seems to *me, gentlemen—that—our* course of duty lies just



here. Hem ! I think we should tell Bunce to give the paupers an extra allowance of cider in winter, a little more fire, a good substantial dinner of cheapish sort of food—of course ?”

“ Of course !” said Savage.

“ And see that they have doctoring—some religious ceremonies ; in a word, all necessary and suitable care : for the poor devils can’t, *you* know, Haddock—now you *know* that, don’t you ?—*can’t*, I say, *take care of themselves*, and so try to brush off the bad spots of the thing as much as possible—and—and—”

“ Let ’em slide,” said Savage.

“ Well, not exactly ; yes, something so. Give it a good, humane setting out, and keep easy afterwards—for,” said he, shaking his finger portentously, and changing feet and knees, “ the town won’t be at the damage of any great reform.”

“ No, I s——r !” said Savage. “ The system *is* a religious and humane one. Captain Bunce told me that the old widow Prescott kept the establishment as moral as a church, and that her prayers were enough to save the whole concern from ruin, here and hereafter ; and that as for himself, he never felt more softened and humanely inclined, than when he saw the poor old creatures looking up to him for all their daily bread.”

“ Captain Bunce,” said the Squire, “ is a very good sort of a man, take him—all in all. Sometimes Bunce is rather too snug in his management, perhaps—very humane people would say so ; but we must judge men by the long run, and Cap’n Bunce has had the job now going five years. Bunce knows how to manage them, all things considered—as well—for the town as we could reasonably expect.”

“ *How long is it since you looked in there, Squire Stout ?*” inquired Mr. Haddock.

"Well—whe—w——Let's see, Savage. Didn't we drop in there—last—Sep—tem—or was it—?"

"D——d if I know!" said that worthy.

"We called, I'm sure, Savage, last summer; it might have been a little earlier, or a little later. It don't make much difference."

"Well, I don't recollect calling since a year ago last fall," said Savage. "But what's the odds? Bunce takes all proper care of them; and it always gives me a sort of melancholy to see the critturs. They are a blasted sickly set, not long for this world at best, and a plaguey deal better off when out of it than in. But there it is. They are what they are, and can never be any thing else. Now what's the use, I say, of spending money, or even philanthropy, over the lot, when neither will do any good? They are paying up for past sins. They'd been a good deal better off if they hadn't sinned."

Mr. Haddock answered that, in his opinion, a great deal might be done to improve their condition even where they now were. They might have better clothing, food, rooms, fires, companionship or association; pursue a more desirable mode of daily exercise or labor, and be elevated, instructed, comforted, and prepared the better to live and to die. That here, as in other towns he had heard of, an entirely different system might be pursued, which would consist in placing the poor under the constant and humane care of the town agent, and avoid the sin and shame of knocking them down, as so many cattle, at auction, to any body who thought, by pinching them in every possible way, he might make a little money out of the job. "Nobody," he continued, will bid them off on the score of humanity, but always are they bid off on grounds of selfish considerations. A man bids on them to make money in keeping them—that

is, in half starving, half clothing, half warming them ; half burying them when they, fortunately for him, drop off. Now, gentlemen," he continued, "do you call that a Christian institution—a house of mercy and Christian humanity ? Has it one solitary vestige of philanthropy ? If yourselves were paupers, would it be a comfortable thing to live and die as Harnden did—as others have done, and still are doing ? Where is it better than slavery itself in many of its daily forms ? What feature in it can truly meet the cordial approval of a good man of even common Christian views or humane principles ?"

Squire Ben, and even Savage himself, listened attentively to Haddock's remarks, and confessed that there was more truth than fiction in them, but solemnly declared that the thing could not be helped.

"Well, gentlemen," said Mr. Haddock, "I have consulted with some men about it, and although at present we are few, yet we intend to persevere in an attempt to ameliorate the condition of our paupers. No system of tyranny and oppression resting in human selfishness can stand right in human consciences, nor is it right in the sight of God. These poor creatures have a claim on us to smooth their path to the grave. We owe it to our enlightened humanity and religion to make such a provision for our poor, that it may truly be termed a *Christian beneficence*. Every other thing is simply oppression or tyranny."

The Squire and Savage told Mr. Haddock that his sentiments spoke well for his heart, but that the project was perfectly chimerical.

"When the Little Bear runs up stream, Haddock, you'll get the thing through, and not afore," said Savage.

"Gentlemen," said the Squire, "let us—drop in at the *hotel and take a sling*—what do you say—Savage—Haddock, a *sling*, or *ale*—hey ?"

Mr. Haddock said he did not drink intoxicating liquors, and wished heartily they would follow his "example." Mr. Savage took a sling on principle. He thought it wrong to decline an invitation from one man, and accept from another—it looked selfish and partial. Squire Ben seldom drank any thing but ale, (and little of that,) but "town-business" always "wore on him," and his education had led him to put confidence in invigorating beverages at such times ; they spurred up the system to its full energy, and, in his case, always seemed to possess the exact virtues of a tonic.

The selectmen adjourned their session, and the paupers of Crampton remained at Bunce's.

## CHAPTER VII.

## The Haddocks.

AN hour had not passed after Harnden's departure, before a gentleman on horseback rode up to the poor-house, and pulling up as he saw some of the people in the yard, exclaimed, "Good morning all, good morning! It's a fine cold air to-day."

"It's ruther too cold for a Carolina nigger like Bill, there," responded a gruff old fellow in a tattered drab coat and a slouching apology for a hat.

"Bill don't care fur dat two levies. When I was in de West Indies wid massa Col. Rathburn, the weather make no diff'rence wid Bill; hot and cold all like, so guess Bill can stand a little snap like a dis October grit, without much a grumble."

"Bill's pluck," screamed a wasted hag on the chips, whose garments were sadly torn and soiled, and whose face was wrinkled and disfigured. "Bill's pluck!" screamed she, "he's none of your craven, chicken-blooded scamps like Dan Barnes."

"Mind your lying tongue, Mag, or I'll heave at you!" retorted the gruff old fellow who first spoke, balancing a brick in his hand.

"Hold up! hold up, my good people," said the stranger, "no cause of quarrel here—why get up one? *Better be on good terms.*"

"*Dan wants his grog,*" shouted the hag, and just then

the heavy brick went whizzing over her head, and tore off the bark of a tree, which, luckily for Mag, it encountered instead of her form. Before he could repeat it, she leaped to her feet, and rushed behind the house. The stranger dismounted, determined to stop the affray.

"This won't do, Dan ; we shan't allow it, you know better," said he, "than to flare up in this manner ; you might have killed her with that brick."

"Wish to —— I had," grumbled he, "she'd gone then with Joe to 'tother world."

"Joe !" said the stranger, in an inquiring and surprised way.

"Yes, old Joe Harnden."

"What of him ? What's he doing ?"

"They're laying him out, now—you knew Joe was dead and gone ?"

The stranger turned away with a surprised and sorrowful expression towards the house. Directly he encountered a slovenly looking boy, grown out of his pants very nearly, with no hat on his head, and his long hair dangling uncombed over his neck and ears. The boy made a low bow and stopped.

"It's too late, sir, Joe's gone too," said he.

"Jims," said Mr. Haddock, for it was he, "why did you not run over and inform me of his sickness ?"

"I was going tur ; but, you see, the Cap'n sent me to git the doctor, and Joe died so thunderin' quick there warn't no time ; it's the way, you know, with the poor folks !"

Mr. Haddock groaned as he stood over the body of the departed one, meditating on that life of sorrow, sin, and disappointment, now ended in the society and under the roof of paupers. And he said to his wife on his return home, "*Once, Joe Harnden would have knocked a*

man down who told him he would die in any other condition than that of those who deem themselves worthy of the best lots in Greenwood or Mount Auburn. See, in his case, the work of intemperance and 'fast living.' It is a terrible life they pass, too, in the poor-house ; it is sad and wretched in the extreme—still, we must not give them up."

"Oh, no," said she ; "let us hope to benefit them in some form, and especially that the public mind will, by-and-bye, be aroused to reform these places, and give the poor a more proper care. I do think there will yet be a change in Crampton."

As for the paupers, they must be classed as among the rubbish of this world's humanity. They have no property, few relations and friends, have feeble constitutions and poor health, very little ambition, less calculation ; the lines of their faces show no beauty, nor their forms symmetry or grace. They look out of ugly eyes, they breathe a hateful atmosphere, are ragged, uncouth, and are often very vicious and sinful. Well, there they are. You must look at them. See what a piece of brother humanity can come to. Reflect that these disagreeable beings are in this degeneracy by reason, mainly, of outside pressure. Originally, they had a good start ; but they fell behind in the life-race, and finally pitched headlong into the great slough of Poverty. Here they are—so poor, so poverty-stricken, that they are ashamed of themselves ; cringing, ragged, fearful creatures. But they owe it to poverty that they are so despicable now. They might retain the same souls ; if their bodies were better clothed, they would pass for better stuff. It seems to be an outside pressure, in more senses than *one*, that they go into the pauper class. And what a *class* ! Very well, there they are. Now consider them

actually despised, and as far as possible, forgotten and neglected. We want the line drawn fairly between them and the rich, and to show them most grudgingly supported, and no concealment of the grudge. Now if we can't easily love that which is in itself no longer lovely and loveable, *we may truly pity and befriend it*. And this is duty, especially if applied to man. The suffering and the poor we ought to relieve, and so put in our relief that it will not only gladden, but elevate the subjects of it. If we do this, we show that we work for the poor out of real principle, from true pity, not to say love.

But these paupers seem, and they are, a forbidding class of men and women to work on. We must be *very* charitable indeed, or we shall fail of doing them any real good. They represent the great idea of want, or poverty. There they are in the clutches of poverty. Now consider the case and decide for thyself, reader, if duty does not lie towards them in the shape of help and encouragement, instead of neglect and contempt.

The inhabitants of Crampton knew, in general, less about the condition of their town-paupers than they did about the slaves of South Carolina, or the Sepoys in India. Those they read about; their town-paupers they left in the care of the "overseers" or selectmen.

Still, we should give credit where it belongs. There were persons who pitied them, and endeavored to do them service, and who sought to change the manner of their public support. We need hardly say that such an one was Mr. Haddock, who was one of those open-hearted, generous souls, that if he saw any body suffering in his power to relieve him, would go about it at every cost to himself. He never stopped to ask if a man was rich or powerful, or poor and uninfluential; if



he could relieve him, he at once attempted it. He lived not far from the poor-house, and often went over there to inquire how they got along.

So Mrs. Haddock was a lady of rare qualities of mind and heart. She was a sincere Christian, a pure-minded philanthropist, agreeing with her husband in all his benevolent plans, and to the utmost of her ability, helped them on. She was a lady of dignity and beauty, with great sweetness of character and energy of mind. Her views of duty were as clear as the light, and her decisions formed with surprising quickness, because her standard was the word of God. But the gentleness of woman shone through all her actions, things visionary, forward, bold, and absurd, forming no part of her excellent character, and commanding no attention or sacrifice of her womanly dignity and loveliness. They had three agreeable and very intelligent daughters, Frances, Ellen, and Sarah, and Mrs. Haddock took the highest interest in the formation of their characters. Her aim was to cultivate in them a correct idea and sincere love of benevolence. She desired them to possess an earnest compassion for the poor and suffering, and to have it for a great aim in life to do good— not merely because there might be those who needed their kind offices, but for good's own sake, from a principle of goodness. Then she knew that artificial character, and spasmodic exhibitions of goodness would form no part of their mature development. In the main, she was successful. The girls were remarkable for system, thoroughness, true taste, excellent discrimination in their "charities," and for a judgment that very early distinguished them from a great many giddy heads and would-be-fashionable young ladies around them. They were not very handsome *girls, but they were* decidedly agreeable ; and they were

positively propossessing to many who professed to be good judges of beauty, but who declared it impossible to say whether *they* were handsome, or for some other cause attractive and winning. They had so many agreeable ways with them, people were so much pleased with their conversation, that it was almost impossible not to feel that, inasmuch as many look for beauty in females to interest them, they must be after all, very handsome young ladies !

It was well for the poor of Crampton that this family befriended them ; that under all circumstances they could rely on their sympathy. Mr. and Mrs. Haddock lamented the condition the paupers were in, and the want of active and sympathetic labor in their behalf. It did not seem to them necessary that they should be kept in a manner at once disgraceful to the town, and mortifying and painful to themselves. They could see no good reason why there should be an unwillingness to provide for at least their conditional elevation.

“ Why should they not be comfortable also ? ” inquired Mr. Haddock, “ why always kept in a state of abject misery, subject to every human trial that such a state supposes, and of which it is the fruitful parent ? Why not be respectably clothed, comfortably fed, and warmly housed ? Why not put to suitable employment, and when they are sick, in want of assistance, why should they not enjoy the attendance of physicians, and the care of a nurse ? ”

They frequently brought up the subject in their family, and made it a topic of conversation with their neighbors. And living near to Captain Bunce, Mr. Haddock not unfrequently called on him, and visited the poor. Sometimes he had a little work that he would *offer them ; occasionally some blind, lame, or feeble re-*

presentative of the poor-house would stray away to his premises, leaning on a rough staff, and Mrs. Haddock seldom permitted such a visitor to go away without a good bit of the breakfast or dinner that had been prepared for her own household.

If Mrs. Haddock or her daughters discovered any of the paupers needing warmer clothing, they would do all in their power to supply their wants. Still, it was often difficult to render as much relief as the charitable feeling prompted, for they were "Captain Bunce's people," and he occasionally resented all "interference," as he termed it, with his plans. He was on the best of terms with Mr. Haddock, but now and then he would fly in a passion, and say that Haddock and his wife were "humoring the '*patients*' to death, and making them uneasy and mightily particular." Moreover, the manner of supporting the Crampton paupers was bad for their morals. They had little or no good instruction, example or motive. They were neglected and despised. If any were intemperate and vicious, very little restraint was ever used to correct their ways, so that it was not always safe to bestow your charities upon them, and was always discouraging. There were among them those who would not hesitate to pawn a coat, or a dress, a piece of meat, or even the Bible, for a small bottle of rum, or for a little tobacco. There were some of this class improvident, rough, saucy, wicked. All were not so. Some were truly virtuous persons, who had been brought into circumstances of poverty by afflictions and misfortunes that they themselves could not avoid. And there were others who were simple, weak in body and mind, their wants few, their condition never a very elevated one, never lower than now.

## CHAPTER VIII.

**BEUF** for the Paupers. "He that considereth the poor, lendeth to the Lord."

The immense deposits of virtuous credits laid up by a great many stock-towns in New England, of and for their regard for the Poor, it will take a good while in the next world to estimate.

"I WILL go over and pay Captain Bunce a visit," said, or thought, Mr. Savage, as he counted over, for the twentieth time, a stock of salt provisions in his cellar, consisting of sundry portions of beef A, I; beef A, II; beef A, III, C. B.; salt beef, long since packed, and waiting a favorable turn in the market for a cash transaction. "A, I," represented lot of first packed beef—a lot of provisions bought on speculation, selected a long time back from the butcher's slaughterings, and made up of neck pieces, shanks, and their side bits, rather dark, bloody, and tough, this was "A, *number one*." "A, *number two*," represented a more recent purchase of similar provisions, longer packed. It was beef "A." In this respect it resembled "number one." But the honest severity of the speculator led him to designate it as "number two, A," which carried the appearance of prime "A" beef as to time, inferior only in the reasonable item of quality. As for "A, III, C. B.," the brand itself represented good beef, of third choice as to the cuts, inspected beef of good number three brand. But "A, III, C. B.," was really the owner's private mark on the barrel, by means of it he read as follows: "A barrel of three qualities of meat, *one part being poor enough, another part poorer, and*

third part the poorest salt meat in market." "C. B." What do these letters represent, branded boldly on the head of the barrel? C. B.! They may stand for the name of the owner by whom the beeves were fatted and driven to market for slaughter, a good and honorable mode of pledging the article now under salt and brine. "C. B!" Yes, truly; they may simply convey the idea of *Corned Beef*, a good and delicious article for a stout and hungry man to dine on; or they may be the initials of *Cash Beef*, bought for cash, worth the cash, to be sold for cash; or they may contain an idle boast, *Can't be Beat* beef, that you know about as soon as you see it! But in Mr. Savage's nomenclature they simply denoted CAST BEEF, i. e., beef that came to salt in consequence of an unfortunate termination of life, by a sort of suicide on the part of the animal himself, rolling down into a position that he might have known would kill him before help could arrive in the morning. Criminal Beef, therefore, Cursed Beef—but who cares what it is, or what it is not? It has a fair brand, "A, III, C. B.," call it beef, worked off—for—*cas*—*h*, which is smoother than *cas*—*t*. "I will go over and see Bunce," said, or soliloquized the owner. "He can use this stuff; it is doubtful about selling to Wallace, the merchant, at any price. His customer's won't buy it, and it won't bear a very tall recommendation any where. That's so. But the folks at Bunce's, what do they care? They'll like it, I reckon. It was good once, bad as it is now, and if Bunce buys it, why of course they'll eat it, and for aught I know, will be confoundedly thankful for it. People musn't starve in this free and fertile country. No, no. Let them live and be merry, say I. Yes, I'll go over and bargain off *this lot*—let us see. Lot A, I, two barrels. Lot A, II, *three barrels*. Lot A, III, C. B., i. e., can't bless it, ha!

ha! ha! Nice lot, that—two barrels. In all, seven barrels—I'll go right off, for the beef has evidently seen its best days, and won't improve by storage."

"Where now, Mr. Savage?" inquired his wife, "don't you see the dinner is just ready; are you going away before dinner, eh?"

"Yes, hang the dinner, wife. I have been ruminating over that villainous meat down stairs, till the very idea of corned beef is sickening. I am bent on getting it off my hands. Don't you think Bunce will like it for the poor folks, eh?"

"Well, why not, now? That's what I have thought on a dozen times. Yes, they'll do well with it."

"What's it worth, wife?"

"All you can get, I'll venture."

"Seven dollars?"

"Seven dollars!"

"Yes."

"No, Mr. Savage, it is not worth seven dollars. You can buy the best for nine and ten, you know."

"I guess it'll bring six, won't it?"

"No, if you sell it for five dollars, Mr. Savage, you'll be a lucky man, my word for it."

"Well, I shall sell it for what I can get. As for storing it longer in my cellar I won't. I'll work it off on Bunce or somebody, if I get but three dollars a hundred for it. Why, it has got awfully bad the last month."

"Sell it, sell it, Mr. Savage—or give it away."

"Give it away!"

"Yes, if you can't sell it."

"Oh, nobody will want it as a gift, must *sell* it if I get rid of it. I'll work it off at some price—and the higher we put it the more we'll get. So good-bye."

*Captain Bunce was thinking what he should do next*

with his stock of poor folks to supply them with provisions not too substantial and costly, when he was surprised and delighted by a call from Mr. Savage, one of the overseers, between whom and himself there was a complete understanding as to expenses for the paupers. Now Savage had no thought of doing anything for the poor on the town, except what might be deemed absolutely necessary to preserve their lives ; as for comfort, cleanliness, improvement, and the like, these never entered into his calculations. "Pinch them all you can, and then pinch them a little more," was his motto. Capt. Bunce was glad, I say, to see him, because sure that he would be able to help him in his dilemma, and endorse his plans.

The conversation between these worthies led forthwith to the subject uppermost in their minds.

"You have a good many to feed, Captain Bunce."

"About twenty ; you see the cold has driven in some."

"They are a hard set of folks, ain't they though ?"

"A bad lot, Mr. Savage ; spoiled by indulgence and luxury."

"The overseers know about it, Cap'n ; they know you've a task to provide for them, and to clothe and warm them, and all that thing. Yes, they consider these matters, and really sympathize with you a great deal."

"Ah !" said the Captain, "they don't now ?" and he drummed with his foot.

"Yes," said Mr. Savage, "'a great deal,' that is, Cap'n, they think you're a plaguy sight too lenient with them, and put yourself too much out to comfort them." And Mr. Savage rubbed his knee with his left hand, and *scratched his temple* with the forefinger of his right.

"*It is impossible to please everybody,*" replied the

Captain, "and if I err on the side of humanity—and the Board dislike it, why then, I must bear it, though I could wish to keep in with them."

"Never fear, Capt'n Bunce ; the Board put the greatest confidence in you—all things considered—only they've an idea or two that might do you good if you understood."

"Yes?"

"To be sure. You see, Captain, the fact is, the Board know that you are the right man to manage these folks, and that you are as indulgent and careful of them as of your own limbs. In fact we are afraid you'll lose money—and *that* you can't afford to. The Board don't want you to do that, you know!"

"Of course not," said the Captain.

"Of course," said Savage in reply. "Now as winter comes on, and they'll want more clothes, and more cider, and more of this, that and the other—a mighty fuss they make about nothing—the Board hope you'll be judicious, and not run behind hand, by being quite too lavish."

"Of course," said Bunce.

"Yes," said the other, "we understand this matter. The Board think you'll gain it by dosing pretty stiff with hard cider, which is a cheap drink, and they all like it, you know?"

"Very true."

"Yes, very," said Savage. "Then they think that you might burn a little cheaper sort of fuel—more brush, soggy wood, old knots, chips, and so forth, and blaze away at little expense, but with quite a comfortable fire. You see they're a cold-blooded, shivery sort of folks, and fire goes as far as food with them."

"A good deal further," said Bunce, "it don't make *much difference with them* what they eat, if it's hot, and



if they have a heating fire. So I reckon soup, hot soup, made of anything that's decent, you know——"

"Just so," said Savage—"and a good blaze, are about all they want."

"Well, I'll be hanged, Capt'n, if that ain't about my idea on the point. Cheap food, well cooked, is as good for them as dear food, especially if it ain't half done, you know."

"I want just now to find a lot of something for them. I've run out a lot of dull codfish that Wallace furnished me, and——"

"I wonder, Captain Bunce, if you couldn't afford to go in for them, a little lot of my stock beef, stored in my cellar ; a small lot, not over dear—in fact I'll sell it cheap."

"Beef, you say ?"

"Ai, beef."

"Well—I rather think—but I don't know, to be sure, that you wouldn't want too much for it."

"I want all it's worth, Capt'n, but I have got more than I want for my own family—and to say the truth, it is rather a hard lot of meat, and we don't eat much of it at our house. But what of that ? There it is for sale cheap."

"Then you don't ask full market price for it ?"

"Not at all, not at all, no, no, Captain, not at all."

"And what discount do you make on it, eh ?"

"I'll sell it low—I will now, depend on't. What should you say, Captain Bunce, were I to put it down three dollars below the market, eh ? Yes, sir—three dollars !"

"And call it seven ?"

"Ai, seven. How does that strike you, eh ?"

"I——"

"You see, Captain, it is solid, full weight, and will last like an old family Bible. One barrel will keep the whole company a month, and eat it all the time. I never saw such beef. You see it is home fed—none of your western, stringy, distillery fed stuff—not at all, but regular pack-beef, *prime*."

"Not mess—of course," said the Captain.

"Why, no, of course not; mess is worth twelve dollars, cash. But this little lot is good, prime beef. It ain't the best of pieces, we all know—and is a little old, hard, but three dollars off, you know, eh, Captain? And just the thing for your people. You see it comes handy for you just as winter sets in, a tough winter coming on, and prices of food going right up. I will put it at seven for the lot, eh?"

"I dare say it is cheap," said Captain Bunce, "but I am rather afraid of tough beef, for the folks are a little lame in the jaws, you know, being oldish, and fond of slosh."

"Ha! ha! ha! Captain, good, not bad. But the beef is nourishing, though rather stiff, and once down it answers all purposes, and nobody knows or cares whether it's first chop, and tender, or not—and it saves lots of money."

"The beef, Mr. Savage, will answer, I dare say, but you and I know it is tough."

"Why, yes, Capt'n, it is; but then it is so d—cheap, you know?"

"I'll think of it, Mr. Savage, yes, I will," and the Captain put his hands in deep in his pantaloons pockets.

"Think of it!"

"You know one wants a little time to think of the matter. But I'll make you an offer. You say there are *three or four barrels*?"

"Yes, I should think so." And Savage counted them over three or four times on his fingers to be sure of it. "Yes, there are three, certain," said he—and after a pause he added, "I won't swear but there's a trifle more."

"Well, Savage, I'll take the lot on six months at six dollars."

"Oh, ho! Captain. Hang your 'six.' You know it's dog-cheap at seven. Take it at seven, and feed 'em on it till they're fat as bucks. The Board will like it, I know. Fact is, you took the gang fifty dollars under, and every body knows it. Now you must buy cheap, and buy the right sort, or you'll come out sold, eh? I want to help you all I can—call it seven and it's yours, eh?"

"Savage, you are a little heavy on me. I want the meat, but seven is not cheap for it. No. You say there are three barrels—I wish there warn't but two, now I do, on my honor. I'll tell you, Savage, what I'll do—give me two barrels, 'A, I,' at seven, and keep the balance to yourself."

"Pshaw, now Capt'n, what's two barrels of beef in your family? Ha! ha! ha! You want the entire lot. I can't sell A, I, and keep the other. Now that wouldn't do at all."

"Well, I say, Savage, I'll take the lot at six fifty, six months."

"Six fifty," soliloquized the other, "six fifty, too confounded low, too bad, tremendous discount—can't, can't stand it. It's a bad spec, I vow—six f-i-f-t-y—w-h-e-w"—

"Well," interrupted Captain Bunce, "what do you say, Savage; it's *all I'll give you* for the grizzly stuff if you ponder over it for a month. What say you?"

"You shall have it—yes—let it go. Take it, Bunce, *and feed your folks* on it till they're as strong as stags. *Fact is, they will draw heavy* on you if you don't buy

cheap. Board think you are too easy with them, and will run behind if you keep them too well. You shall have the beef."

"Agreed," says Bunce, "four barrels at the outside?"

"One, two, three, four—there's certainly four, I don't swear to the barrels," and Savage counted over his fingers again and again. "But more or less, take it at your own offer, six fifty, six months."

"I'll take it," said Captain Bunce.

"And now," said the second selectman, "you know these poor devils will die off pretty fast, any way, so you'd better get the doctor to call once in a while, and take a little blood from some of them, and give a little mercury and ipecac, and paregoric or rhubarb. It will look humane. And so," said he in a whisper, "now and then call in Parson Rowland or Rector Evans to give the folks a religious Bible-talk. It will have a grand effect, Captain. Every body, Haddock, and all, will feel satisfied that you do every thing in *your* power, for both body and soul of the wretches. Esq. Ben and I think you do too much for them now, and you had better be careful not to overfeed them—as you have done sometimes—because, Captain, you can't afford to be too generous."

After this Mr. Savage left, and Captain Bunce fell to ruminating over his past conduct towards the paupers. He eventually became rather sober and melancholy, a little absent-minded, and curt in his manners, insomuch that the folks noticed it, and made sundry comments on his actions.

"He is thinking of poor Harnden, I think," said the widow, "of his sorrowful death, and I hope it will be blessed to him."

*"More likely he is thinking of his own sins, and is*

justly alarmed," said Alanson Boyce, the State pauper, who was sustained at this institution according to the statute law of the State, at a sum "not exceeding one dollar" per week. Alanson, whatever he once had been—and that we shall have time to speak of by-and-bye—was now a forlorn being, impotent, poor to the last degree, who, in his poverty, wandering here and there, fell into the hands of the authorities of Crampton, and he became a State charge. When he dies, his funeral charges, which the common law of the States fixes at six dollars—not *exceeding* that, and as much less as you please—will go into the bill against the Commonwealth.

"The Captain's had seas of trouble," said colored Bill, one of the paupers, who worked a little in the fields, cut up wood at the door, took some care of the cows, horses, and young cattle ; and when moving about was seen bare-headed, and often bare-footed, under all skies, and in all seasons. His red flannel sleeves cropped out at his elbows, and at every other convenient loop-hole ; and when he was without a coat, his cord suspenders showed the service they rendered his patched and tattered breeches.

Bill was a clever, simple person, of a decided color, being a regular importation from Africa—a West India slave, belonging to Colonel Rathburn. When the Colonel came to America, and settled in a romantic, beautiful spot in Crampton, Bill accompanied him, and had his freedom given him—poor soul!—as though he were not entitled to it, all the Colonel Rathburns in the country notwithstanding—all the laws and customs of men and nations to the contrary notwithstanding : *his freedom given him!* Who gave it? GOD, HIS MAKER. Who took it away—*Colonel Rathburn?* Yes, Colonel Rathburn *bought him*, soul and body, and worked him in the

West Indies, and brought him to America, and there *he also* conferred on him here the honor of freedom! So Bill having two good titles to liberty—viz., one on the part of his Maker, and the other on the part of Colonel Rathburn—was a man of some consequence. He lived in the family till the Colonel died, and until his wife died and the children had spent the estate. Two of them died in great want and disgrace. Bill was their chief helper for a long time, fairly earning money by day's work to support them in their great destitution. He was now old and feeble. His hair was thin and gray. He wore a serious, solemn look, and said but few words. He could hoe a little, pick up stones, cut a little brush for the fire, wait on Mrs. Bunce and the family, (and all white people are fond of having a negro do chores for them, because negroes are very deferential, and so well seem to know their inferior position!) But he is old, is rather stiff, often cold, of little real use, of little personal comfort. Bill may not last long. There's many a worse man than he. He is never hateful, selfish, or clamorous; never in any body's way; never sports with the unfortunate. He really does to others all the good he can, knowing from his own experience that this is a "troublesome world." Bill speaks kindly and sorrowfully to poor reduced white people, for he knows that they must suffer much to be brought down from an easy and a high position in life to such a state of want as is indicated by the poor-house.

"Yes," says Bill, "the Captain's had seas of trouble; I don't wonder he's sort'er sad and down at the mouth. Who wouldn't be?"

Aunt Dorothy, smoking her pipe, and leaning on her staff, shook her old sides as she laughed and shouted—  
"*The Captain's thinking of my blessing, I guess; don't you, aunt Prescott? ha, ha!*"

In this group of paupers there is Dan Barnes, an old man of sixty-five, with a firm, iron-like constitution, of late somewhat shaken by his excessive intemperance, the besetting sin of a life-time. He is coarse, brutal and ugly. Ten years of his precious probation, he has passed in the State Prison, by his assiduous attention to business there, materially lessening the expenses of his sojourn in that quiet institution, though learning there no valuable lessons to apply in his individual practice outside. He is a hard fellow, being an old fighter and swearer, but shiftless and thriftless—a starving old pauper at the last. There is hardly a more unblushing villain, a more desperate character than he, only that being nearly three-score-and-ten, and broken up somewhat by a life of extraordinary forage on society, and collision with conscience, as well when out of as when in the quarters furnished him by the State, he cannot execute all the wickedness that is in him. He will practice it out more perfectly, as is supposed, when he gets into the prison house, which favors uneasy souls in acting out character, i. e., perfect character—a character that here, by reason of some moral and social relations, they find it a little difficult to make as transparent as they could humbly wish. Maugre all this, it is fearful to have him about—to hear his coarse jests, listen to his foolish speeches and songs, his oaths and obscenity. It is one of the objections to a life at the poor-house, that Dan is one of its regular inmates—so thinks old aunt Dorothy—the widow Prescott even, with all her goodness and charity ; the young, half-witted Roxy Waldins and squalid Mag Davis. So thought once old Joe Harnden. Even colored Bill dislikes him ; and Jims, the boy, hates him as he hates salt pork when it is sweet, and coming *but once in a week*, fails to go round ! “ C—— the

pork," says Jims on such uneasy occasions. Alas! that the imprecation should have a reflex influence more direful than its direct. In like manner even, Mrs. Joanna Dodge, the old lady in a red cotton handkerchief for her head dress, and the lame, staff-using widow Rice, and tall Ebenezer Cowles, ruined by hard drink, and Brige, the old shoe-maker of Crampton.

And even old Joe Tucker and Polly his wife, and all the others wish Dan, comfortable and sober in his old apartments, another secured to him against all outsiders by the careful consideration of the State, for the term of his natural life. It is uncomfortable to any man of spirit to be harassed in this way. So Dan is continually ruffled by the treatment he receives from his fellow mendicants, and determines that he will be a real porcupine among the snakes. Dan had once owned a farm; he had a good house, a pleasant wife, and was thought to be well off. But by degrees his own coarse nature revealed itself, he got down to a point so low in character and position, that there was no relief. He went to prison. His wife, who had long suffered sadly at his hands, now obtained a separation from him, and, albeit, she survived his liberation, she never saw him more. He was a bloated, swearing, evil man, and few there were of any class in human life, who affiliated with him. Dan, with one of his muttered oaths, declared that he had studied character a good deal in his former residence, meaning his long ten years' residence, to which we have already alluded, and was sure that Captain Bunce was "trying a sort of *States prison reform* of life." Nobody knew better than Dan what State prison penitence meant! Very generally Captain Bunce was criticised by his poor people who, on the whole, rather regarded



him as working a sort of up-hill-repentance for the shortcomings of his past life.

But Captain Bunce had in a measure forgotten Joe Harnden, aunt Dorothy's blessing, and the widow's prayers. The "short comings of his past life" were, it is true, overwhelming him, but the short comings themselves were the out goes of his establishment, that he rather considered had been too generous—too satisfactory to the town, unnecessarily burdensome to himself. He was, in a sort of penitent brown-study as to the best way of retrieving his past errors, and applying his humanity by a more stringent and rigid rule, avoiding such a tremendous going beyond his duty. He could not get over it that he should lose the "good opinion," as he called it, of Squire Ben Stout, and of the other selectmen, or that they should be troubled with the idea that he was treating the paupers too well.

"Heaven knows," soliloquized he, "that I never meant to do that ; the most I ever dreamed of was to do about right, but to be charged with squandering money on them too lavishly—ah ! 'that is the unkindest of all cuts.'" The Captain had heard this saying in his life as applied to others, but he now thought it would apply to him better than anything else he could recall to mind, either of an oral or recorded nature, and so he "out with it," adding, as he put his hands in his pockets and fumbled over the loose coppers and ten cent pieces there, "Heaven save me from my best friends," which was another sentiment the Captain recollected just in time to give him some comfort.

But on the whole he was unhappy over this subject. He did not like to be called a spendthrift in a case so utterly destitute of true merit. He could conceive of *no real temptation* to such a sin, if sin it were, and he

confessed himself more troubled about it than he ever remembered to have been before.

Poor, conscience-stricken Bunce. He has very sad reflections—the paupers notice and speak of it—but at the same time, he encounters another great difficulty, the two are almost enough to crush him ; it is this, to find a rule of fractions by which to work a larger denominational value to his poor-house “findings.”

## CHAPTER IX.

NORTHERN fear of the Poor-House. The Pepper's. Very poor people, and people not the poorest, often and generally envy the rich. It was an early development in society that riches carried great weight, so all the poor people have been mad after them. Here we show you what a pleasant thing it is to be rich.

CRAMPTON had a large, busy town-population, i. e., an active, enterprising village citizenship, where the majority of the people resided, and it had a large rural population. There were some very large and fine farms in the place. The village, or "city," as it was called, quite on the east side of the town, like many others in New England, was filled up with mechanic shops, manufactories of various kinds, stores, hotels, and so forth. A large, rapid stream, formed by the union of the Little Bear and Slip-Slop Creeks, furnished a magnificent power for machinery, and was improved to its utmost extent by the enterprising capitalists of the place and of the neighboring towns. A very large cotton factory, four stories high, two hundred feet in length, containing eight thousand spindles, and thirty or forty looms, involving a first cost of three hundred and fifty thousand dollars, and giving work to more than two hundred men, women, and children, was the principal manufacturing establishment in the place, though as it was on the east side of the bridge, it was really in the town of Ladder-ville. But the bridge, a wide, strong, stone arch, formed a connection so complete that it was all called by the *name of Crampton*, a very busy, factory-bell sounding

village, grown up rapidly, having also a large imported population, three or four churches with and without crosses, long lines of similar looking dwellings, interspersed with hotels, stores, "*saloons*," as they are called, and "*bazaars*," entered at the sides of screens, and brilliantly lighted, where, behind the screens, pieces of naked statuary fill the niches and recesses of the walls, (such is, indeed, the public taste!) and exquisite paintings of robeless women in every luscious attitude also adorn them, pleasant incitives these to a social "round" at the bar; billiards, cards, and dancing completing the happy joviality of these—*forsooth—saloons! bazaars!*

In this busy town there were also found the usual appendages to society in its highly civilized state, and without which a certain per cent. of the population would die of *ennui*, sensibly and painfully noting the absence of their chief good—and making the streets of Crampton as still and as gloomy as a Sabbath to them—I mean the appendages of oyster shops, groggeries, and beer-holes, nine-pin alleys, cock-fights, cards, billiards, and so forth. And at and in these, graduated much of the pauperism of the town. In these rummies, and licensed houses for the "refreshment" of body and spirit, many a Harnden, Dodge, and Sherman, got his ticket to the privileges and entertainments of the poor-house. Here, also, were livery-stables where horses and carriages were furnished on Sundays, at higher prices than on week days, for the demand was greater. Here were found open drug-stores, all day and evening of the Sabbath, for there are more calls for ipecac and elixir paregoric on Sunday than on any other day. We wonder why the banks did not follow the example, on account of notes maturing on that day. It would, indeed, seem to be more in accordance with the exactness of banking rules, than to make those

notes payable on Saturday, or to "grace" them till Monday—a never-thought-of-thing, this last, we agree !

In the village proper, or city as was its *nom de plume*, there were also here and there, in the so-called "places," "avenues," and "squares," smart blocks of houses, tenanted by the aristocracy of the place, i. e., by retired rich men, by owners of stock in the factory, bank presidents, directors, stockholders, brokers, overseers, heavily salaried agents, officers in various benevolent institutions, etc., etc. And in one of these, a princely dwelling it was, on the Ladderville side of the stream, where were several of the handsome public buildings, and three or four modern built churches, lived George Pepper, Esq., a hundred thousand dollar stockholder in the great brick factory.

Pepper was an only child of John Pepper of Crampton—miserly, churlish, rich old John Pepper—who, though once young, once an active merchant, once a man among men, is now a peevish, unhappy, fearful old miser, living in the outskirts of the town, on one of his farms, in a low, dingy-looking house, once tenanted by one of his farmers. He is an owner, though unwillingly, in the factory—George Pepper managing his interest there and his own. But the old gentleman does not leave it wholly to George, his anxiety forbidding this wholesale reliance on another, even his first-born son and only one. He is owner in other stock, in bank stock, in real estate, and has money on exorbitant interest well and securely funded. But he is poor : nobody is more so. He has not a dollar he can call his own ; he has no money to let, or lend, or give to any body or for any object. But still he is every body's banker who can give him his security ; and notwithstanding his great poverty, he can *command immense sums of money*. The miserly quality

of John Pepper's old age is communicated to the soul of his wife, Mrs. Rachel Pepper, who incessantly busies her mind with the uncomfortable consideration that her husband is too great a spendthrift, and that both he and she will yet come to be occupants (*in re*) of the Crampton poor-house. So thought Pepper himself. It was this idea that made him extremely nervous, unaccommodating, and personally griping. Mr. and Mrs. Pepper lived on less food than the individual half-fed paupers. But their dieting in this cheap way was a voluntary act, the result of their private reasonings on the future, and the conviction of their minds on the score of duty.

In the case of the Peppers was truly exhibited the apprehension of the people at the North of coming to the poor-house. If they have a terror—the people in general—of *any* earthly calamity or downfall, it is this condition of poverty. It is feared by the rich as well as by the poor; the learned as well as the ignorant; many an author, poet, teacher, divine, having had the pinchings of hunger in the garret, and tasted in an alms-house or hospital the bitterness of want. It has foreshadowings of evil to the young as well as the old, having a terrible and common celebrity and importance. Parents introduce the idea early to the notice of their children, informing them that unless they save all their money, unless they are sharp in their bargains, look well to their own advantage, are very economical in their necessary expenses, and disinclined to generous charity and benevolence, they will surely come to the poor-house. This is the instruction of many a fireside, the seed sown in the youthful heart, that takes root and grows up into a tree of deadly shade on the pathway of life.

This fear of the poor-house, the terror it inspires, has in itself the gleamings and rumblings of retribution; for

as one has cultivated a heart of selfishness, and denied the calls of mercy and charity, so he thinks it may fall to him in the end that the same blasting winds shall sweep away his goods which have carried away the goods of others.

The poor-house is the possible chance of every man, woman and child. It is the refuge of the blind, the lame, the outcast. And who may not become as one of these, even ?

Old Mr. and Mrs. Pepper were very careful accumulators. They worked together to this end always, never designedly parting with any portion of their gains for private enjoyment, nor willingly for any public good. Their dwelling house much resembled in point of age, color, and true value—the poor-house itself. Within, however, it must be confessed, the very miserly disposition of its occupants, led them to scrub the walls, and air the rooms, and preserve them from decay. Mrs. Pepper thought little or nothing of scrubbing skin from her fingers, and of deadening the tender sensibility of hands and limbs in the service of a drudge at all work. It was nothing worth to wear out herself if thereby she saved a penny, and put a little in the background the tormenting vision of future poverty.

The roof of their old mansion was patched up here and there, that it might not leak a drop ! Dampness on the roof was bad enough ; but in the chambers—lo ! the poor-house. The house boasted a front door, but it seldom swung on its hinges, as the other entrance on the east end of the dwelling was the more convenient to the kitchen, and it was there the worthy couple passed most of their hours when together. But it had no front fence. That were an idle expense, both to make and keep it in *repair*—especially, also, as neither shrub nor flower

grew and thrived under the eaves. It was a low, dark, dingy looking house, cheerless, forbidding, uncomfortable. True, *man and woman* tenanted it—a married pair sworn to love and helpfulness ; but there also was apprehension, selfishness, worldly care, and shudderings over a possible future—a certain *seeming* assurance of the dark and gloomy days of want. This it was that ruled out love, happiness, and peace from their home ; that blasted their old age, and transformed every blessing into a curse. Omens of the future ; omens of a dark and wretched future ; omens of poverty, loomed up in every picture of life, to others pleasing and predatory of enjoyment.

Mr. Pepper was close with himself to a penny, emphatically cautioning his aged spouse never to buy steaks for dinner above the six cent rounds, and those but once in a fortnight ; and Mrs. Pepper begged him to moderate his appetite for steaks, by previous indulgence on herrings two for a cent. Mr. Pepper threatened to sell all his hens if Mrs. Pepper allowed herself to use an egg in cooking pies, puddings, or cake ; while Mrs. Pepper administered reproof to her husband for putting twelve eggs under a hen, when it was evident from the brood of chickens that only eleven would hatch. In twelve and a half cent trades, Mr. and Mrs. Pepper seldom failed to appropriate the half cent to themselves. Whenever interest on notes for odd days made the fractional value doubtful, Mr. Pepper reasoned the doubts into assurances in his favor. Both Mr. and Mrs. Pepper had, time and again, proved to their perfect conviction, by numerical calculations, the absolute wasting of their fortune in a given time, and they grew more and more miserly, mean, and mercenary as they approached the grave—*seeing, hearing, dreaming* of nothing so much as



the same portentous symbol of their latter end, the poor-house.

Even Christian men and women at the North are much troubled at the idea of future poverty. It requires all their philosophy, and the aid of much prayer, to overcome these apprehensions. They work hard, and save every thing in their power : very frequently is this so, that they may not die in the poor-house, or in poverty.

Thus passed they into life beyond their three-score years and ten, feeling more and more the need of wealth, of what comforts it might procure them, of the good they might accomplish with it, but, under the ceaseless workings of a miserly fear of want, viewing themselves every new year poorer than in any previous one. What ceaseless activity did Mr. Pepper display in guarding his investments ! How constantly he predicted the failure of banks and associations, the downfall of prices, the ruin of all capital, and the failure of all men to meet their engagements ! He would frequently declare, when a payment was made him of interest on a note, or the principal itself, that he would never again loan a dollar ! But the renewal of the temptation, when the security was undeniably good, as often led him to break his promise, in spite of his predictions and fears. Accordingly, his interest money was yearly of great amount, and as he expended literally almost nothing, of course his property was ever and largely on the increase.

But *more* begets its want, and Mr. and Mrs. Pepper were the poorest people in Crampton ! They never had any thing for new clothes, new furniture, new food, new house, or barn, or vehicle. Never any thing for improving the town, or the country. Never a dollar for some *heart-stirring* benevolence, no money for the poor, none *for education*, none for morals and religion. No, nothing.

"We are too, too poor, and shall come to the poor-house."

Surely there must be something in the poor-house, as an institution in every town, contrary to human pride, comfort, desire, and happiness—the very opposite of the life man ever seeks for himself, for which he toils, and risks life, and reputation, and present enjoyment; the dark picture this, undoubtedly, that man holds up before him to nerve his efforts, to fortify his weakness, to encourage his self-denials. Oh! if he can save his wife, and children, and himself, from the miserable fates of poverty—from the tender mercies of pauperism, from the cold charity of the town, the compulsory help of men who have no souls, and from the self-tortures and degradation of such a state, what labor, to what effort and sacrifice will he not submit, and on how small and scanty portion of life's good nourishment, feed himself!

Yes! I have seen the poor-house, where the inmates huddled together with gleaming eyes, in ragged and patched garments, in cold, and hunger, and wretchedness, men, and women, and children, vice and virtue, innocence and sin, making one fire warm as they gathered round it, and at night making common lodgings on the same creaking, scantily provided bed. Opened doors, and opened halls, and broken windows, in winter let pierce them, blasts which their enfeebled frames could ill endure. And at all seasons of the year the uncleanly, unventilated apartments, gave off a revolting effluvia, from which all the good and wholesome of earth would shrink back in blank and terrible amazement.

And every one of these miserable objects, though a human being, was a pauper, one who could not help himself, who had got through his chances of good fortune, (*if we except the young,*) and was here to look back on

life and shudder over it ; to look forward to a gift-grave, without a head-stone, or a handsome coffin or funeral, the very prayer over his grave a donation, and lamentably patronizing—the mourners, NONE.

I know not why it is so, fully, but the fact cannot and will not be denied, that men at the North have not only fearful apprehensions of the poor-house, but they despise and hate it. No man respects it ; no man esteems it a desirable refuge—not even the poor ; no men or women pray over it as a Christian institution. It is not once named in the catalogue of church charities. No contribution for the poor-house, as such, is ever made in the sanctuary ; be it, however, true that individual charity may sometimes flow that way through undiscovered channels. Of late, on days of public thanksgiving, and at Christmas and New Years, the great hotels in our cities have liberally bestowed, for distribution among the suffering and reclaimed ones at the *Five Points* and elsewhere, the good things of their own princely tables. But it is true, as we have said, that the poor-house is not a special charity of individuals, or of communities of even Christian men. *It is the taxed provision of the town.* Every man's property—hard and selfish old bankers, young and enterprising farmers, men of all trades and professions—their property is taxed to support those who have no property ; to support those that belong to their town, because no other town will support them—one of them. Unwillingly taxed, yet made to bear it ; taxed too heavily, as hundreds reason ; taxed unreasonably *long*, say they. The poor have been through this themselves ; have often, it is likely, paid their tax to support the town paupers, and cursed them between their teeth as they did it. Now they are receiving the same unwillingly proffered soup and bread ! The cure-

ings of generations rest on this house of wailing. Not a being is there, it may be, who has not seen his day of pride, when he cursed the poor for their imbecility and thriftlessness. And so, the "curse causeless" coming not, they in their turn bear it: and it is a fell and bitter one. Every tax-payer is secretly glad, perhaps, when this and that INCUMBRANCE on the town gets through, and goes to his last cold pillow. How the tides of selfishness all set up against this last and unfortunate stopping-place of the poor livers, the poor, thriftless vagabonds, and houseless, homeless, dollarless, dimeless ones of the world! As every body hates and dreads and curses it, so the curse seems to rest upon it; and I do not know so undesirable a home as it, in what may be called a free condition or state of the human body. To be sent to the prison or goal is disgraceful, but not so hopeless and pitiless. A man goes to prison for three, five, or ten years; but he does not by that lose caste with the world. He may survive the ordeal, and with unbroken energies, achieve afterwards a name and secure a fortune. But the pauper is done with. Society hopes not nor expects from him any improvement, nor any available labor or remittances, save the last labor of his dying breathings, the remittances of his taxable support!

Old Mr. Pepper had often cursed the poor-house; Mrs. Pepper had denounced it. Both of them feared it. They predicted their last home in it. They hated it, yet were sure they should tenant its rooms, and taste its bitterest cups. To the poor-house and all its horrors they were fast gliding, though now nearly eighty years of age, and of unquestioned wealth. "We shall go to the poor-house yet," said Mrs. Pepper, when a lady asked her for a dollar to buy garments for Mrs.

Sevens and her eight children ; " we shall go to the poor-house ourselves yet." " Before we die we shall get into the poor-house," said John Pepper, Esq., to his son, who begged him to assist in building a new church ; we shall go to the poor-house, and you know it." And to the poor-house, it is true, they finally went ! Did they not deserve to go there ?

## CHAPTER X.

DUTY leads in the way of securing and laying in PROVISIONS. JIMS vs. DAN,  
and Dan vs. Jims.

ONE morning, soon after the interview which took place between Mr. Savage and Captain Bunce, the latter directed Dick, his son, to have the team put to the cart, "both yokes," and to go over with John, the hired man, and with Dan and Bill, to Mr. Savage's for a lot of beef he had bought of him, and to stop at Durkee's, the butcher, for a barrel or two of heads, neck pieces, and shanks, and at Bowler's for a couple of barrels of cider. "And if you want him, take Jims along with you," said he.

"Want him!" exclaimed Dick; "I should as soon want a wild cat. He's a young devil at best, and needs a flogging every day of his life."

"Hold up, Dick, hold up," said his father; "Jims is a brat, I know; but we must consider that he's young, yet, in manners, and that he will grow better by-and-bye."

"He'll swing for it one of these days, or I'll marry old Mag, by heavens!" said the hopeful Dick.

"Oh, don't be too dead on Jims," replied the Captain. "He may come to the State prison; but I hope he'll escape the gallows. Call him if you want him."

"JIMS!" shouted Dick, three or four times, in vain.

"JIMS!" hoarsely and sternly cried the Captain. But no "Jims."

"Dan," said Dick, as that worthy appeared, "if you

know where Jims is bring him here, and also old Bill. I want you three to go with us this morning."

"Go where?" savagely growled the old criminal.

"Over t'other side, with the team."

"When are you going?"

"Now, in five minutes."

"Havn't had any thing to eat yet."

"Well, whose fault is that? There's food enough, if you are a mind to eat it."

"The cold vituals getting bad tho', and not much on't."

"None of your impudence, Dan. Eat your stuff and come along. Find Bill and Jims, and bring them. Tell Jims to ride old Roan to Sparks' and get her shod, and then come to Savage's with the tackling to hitch her ahead of the team."

In a warm corner of the poor-house "public room," as it was called, not far from the fire, rolled up in a tattered and faded blanket, a human figure might be noticed, apparently in a deep sleep. He seemed regardless of the chattering voices around him, of the shoutings without, even of his own name, of his own hard bed and comfortless bedding, of every thing, of life. His breathings were long and heavy, and he occasionally grated his teeth together, as you have seen or heard children whose sleep is more or less uncomfortable and disturbed, and anon he muttered unintelligible words. But no one noticed him, no one spoke to him, although a number were in the room, and some were loquacious and even merry and facetious over their cold breakfast of yesterday's bone-pickings and liver. They were accustomed to his ways, which also resembled their own, for all in the poor-house lounged down when and where they chose. *Besides, Jims was a lad of but ten or twelve years of age, a mere stripling among them, who, though some-*

what wilful and headstrong, was rather a favorite with the old folks, on account of his willingness to take their part when the Captain was rough and hard on them, and because he often rendered them boyish services, running into the yard for chips, and up stairs for a pipe, and could get down on his hands and knees and stoutly blow up the coals when the fire was low, and now and then could get an extra mug of cider, without discovery, to cheer some fainting soul or thirsty palate, or perchance steal or beg a parcel of tobacco for the common good, and it might happen, a chicken! Naturally a smart, bright boy, the life led at this institution was any thing but appropriate to the development of his true nature, its associations being far below the true standard of morality; its amusements, its labors, its experiences, its comforts degrading and demoralizing. Jims, notwithstanding the disadvantages of his position, was a tall, stout, athletic boy, although rather awkward and ungainly. He now slept on, and breathed heavily as though his rest in the night had been disturbed, and he determined to get its equivalent after sunrise.

In the meantime, aunt Dorothy was trying to munch her breakfast of hard bread and tough liver, washing it down her throat with cheap tea, sugarless and milkless, anon alternating with well watered cider, and interlarding,

“ Drum, de drum, drum, drum, Come let us join,  
Do, de, dro, dro, drum our cheerful songs,  
Drum, drum, drum, dro, de dro drum, with angels  
Dro, dro, dro, round the throne.”

Bill had just fired up his pipe, and was preparing for a good cruise against Old Time, Hard Luck, and Dame Fortune. Boyce, the “author of Blamstown, a novel,” *had unrolled his musty and undecipherable manuscript,*



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"Why, you'll just go with Dick and me and Jims. Where's Jims? Oh, I hear the brat! You'll go over to Savage's for a load; and so be up and stirring, old fellow, or the Captain himself 'll be in your hair."

Poor old Bill grumbled bitterly to be ordered off just then, "but s'posed he must go." Dan passed on, and rousing Jims with a heavy kick, exclaimed—

"Get up here, you young scamp—get off that blanket, you lazy cuss, or I'll tallow you. Don't you hear folks calling? If you don't get up in less than no time, I'll kick you into the fire where you'll finally go, if there is any. Hey?"

Jims was now thoroughly awake. Raising himself partly up, he encountered the fierce glare of Dan, who had so unceremoniously broken up his sleep, and for a moment quailed before it. But this was only for a moment. Springing to his feet, and staring back into the old pauper's eyes a fierceness equalling his own, he exclaimed—

"What do you want of me, old Brimstone, hey? Go to the devil, for all I care. Kick me, will you, old cider-drinker!"

"Yes, I'll kick your life out of you in five minutes, if you don't go about your bisness."

"Kick me again, old villain, and I'll get you horse-whipped. I've a right to sleep on the blanket if I get it first. You know it's none of yourn; nor's any thing in this d—— rotten old house yourn, if it's ever so poor."

"Well, you're under my orders, you young lout, and I tell you to be moving. Move! or I'll tallow you with a raw-hide."

"Move! I won't move a peg for you, old c——."

"You shall, you bastard; be off!"

"I won't!" And Jims doubled up his fists, and braced back against him. As for Dan, who liked this fun, he violently thrust forward both his brawny arms 'o seize and crush the youngster, when a blow from another arm behind him felled him to his knees. Just in time, Boyce had sprung up to rescue the lad; and now, as Dan slowly recovered himself, and with a look of savage ferocity, seemed meditating a thorough revenge on him for interfering, Boyce calmly informed him that if he advanced a step towards him he would annihilate him. The old rascal, however, seemed bent on making an assault, when aunt Dorothy planted herself between the combatants, and told them, with arms stretched out towards each one, that she would "have no fighting there!"

What power to restrain from it she would have had, we know not; but, perhaps fortunately for all parties, at this moment the form of Captain Bunce darkened the door, and Dick followed him with his cart-whip in his hand. The Captain, perceiving at a glance the true state of the case, snatched the whip from the hand of his son, and pushing Boyce aside, put the lash across the shoulders of Dan, and tingled Jims' sides with it, till they both begged for quarters, and promised to have no further dispute.

"Well, now, be off," said the Captain, "both of you; and if they make you any trouble, Dick, put on the lash. They know what their duty is; if not, I'll teach them. As for the rest on you," said he, "keep out of brawls. Better find steady employment, than spend the time in idle talk and wrangling. You'll get a short allowance for this, I'll promise you."

It was night before the men got back.

The team drove slowly into the yard. It consisted of two yoke of oxen, and old Roan the mare on the lead.

Jims was on her back sitting sideways, his feet carelessly dangling by her side, his back curving like the new moon, and his chin resting on his hands. Dan plodded along behind. Bill was riding stowed in among the barrels.

"Well, Dick," said his father, "good luck, hey?"

"Have had a hard pull of it anyhow," said that worthy.

"What, with three or four barrels, and a little cider? Whew, Dick!"

"Three or four barrels! Thunder!"

"Yes, perhaps so, that's enough."

"We'll count them off, if you will."

The Captain grew black with anger, when he counted six barrels of poor beef on the load, a quantity sufficient for him two years.

"What's all this, Dick? What have you here, hey? Six barrels! By George, I'll not stand that any how. Savage knows I never bought six barrels of him."

"So I told him," said Dick. "He had seven barrels, but I refused to take any more than six, and told him we couldn't eat it in two years. But Savage swore you bought the lot."

"So I did the lot of three or four barrels, not all the beef in creation by any means. Six barrels!" and the Captain swore hard. "Well, well, roll it in. Only consider, Dick," said he in a whisper, "the more they eat of it the faster they'll die off."

"That's a true bill and no mistake," replied his hopeful one. "But it's plaguy disagreeable work to handle coffins. If it wan't for that, I'd just as lief they'd drop off one a week as any way."

"Never mind about the coffins, Dick; we get used to *them*, and the most I care about the beef, is the likeli-

hood of having a lot on hand two or three years hence. The chances are that beef 'll fall off ten per cent. before the year's up. I want enough of this feed only, to keep the folks along when other things' scarce you know—not enough to pay interest on for all future time. Savage's a hard one any how, and to get a trade out of him, a man must look two or three ways for Sunday."

"What have you got there, Cap'n Bunce?" shouted a female from the open door of the large mansion. This individual was none other than Mrs. Bunce herself, stout, red-faced, loud talking, coarse and vulgar-looking Mrs. Bunce. The Captain to her inquiry said he'd got home a lot of beef from Savage's.

"Lot of beef from Savage's!" said she, "and is that all beef?"

"To be sure it is—why not?"

"What you going to do with it, Cap'n?" said she approaching him.

"Why, you see, Mrs. Bunce," and the Captain spoke in a low confidential way, and nudged her a little delicate sort of a you-know-a-thing-or-two nudge in her fat arm, "*this is cheap beef*; it's just the sort of feed for the people over yonder, with now and then a good cut for the rest of us."

"Well, if this don't beat all my 'wife's relations,' Captain Bunce—six barrels of poor beef!"

"True, but we can't afford good."

"No—but six barrels! Why, Captain Bunce, you're crazy! All the poor folks in creation couldn't eat it in a year; and as for cooking it, the Lud knows I shan't." Poor Mrs. Bunce! "The Lord knows." Yes, He knows many things that seem hidden from us.

But Mrs. Bunce liked a joke. She wasn't so hard on the Captain, *after all*, as her words seemed. She had a *thorough conviction of his supremacy*, but was now and

then a little assuming ; just enough, at least, to give the Captain a homeopathic dose of uneasiness.

"Mrs. Bunce !" said the Captain, seriously.

"What?" said she, rather suddenly.

"I will take care of the beef!"

Mrs. Bunce looked up for an explanation. She looked into her husband's face : it was cold and resolved.

"Very well," said she. "Beef it is, poor beef, and enough on't."

Mrs. Bunce turned and went into the house. The beef was rolled into the cellar, and the paupers of Crampton were fated to feed on it.

One barrel was opened that evening ; the next day the whole family made a dinner of it.

"It's tough," said the Captain to his spouse.

She nodded.

"It's lean," said Dick.

"Confoundedly so !" said Elisha.

"It's salt," said Betsey.

"I wish father hadn't bo't it," said Henrietta.

What said the paupers ?

"It is impossible, with my poor gums, to eat this beef," said the widow Prescott.

"It is very hard and yellow," said Ebenezer Cowles and Mrs. Dodge.

"It'll bear munching a good while," said aunt Dorothy and Mrs. Rice.

"It's tough as bull's hide," said old Dan.

"It's poor folks' turkey," said poor Boyce.

"My teeth are good," said Jims, "but they crack some."

"Too salt," said Bill. "Good salt-water ham, yaw ! yaw !"

*On the whole, the beef was condemned at the first meal, and it grew no better very fast.*

## CHAPTER XI.

MAG DAVIS.—Were it not for beautiful Woman in this world, we should not have half the respect for ourselves that we now exercise, nor would Society so rise to the dignity of an Institution. As it is, we highly congratulate ourselves, and as to Woman are strictly conservative.

WINTER approaching, the people of Crampton calked their doors and windows to keep out the cold; some banked up their houses, and closed the roll-ways with straw, leaves, and tan. New stoves, finely polished, were ordered; new furnaces, that warmed the whole house, were put up, or the old repaired with new grates, and put in order to heat up at a moment's warning. Abundance of fuel was laid in without regard to cost, and so garments were ordered, furs purchased. Winter arrangements complete were made on every side, because no man or woman with any thing of a competency would think of meeting the rigors of a northern winter unprepared.

There was one class of persons in the town, who, in a very imperfect manner, imitated this consistent example. We mean the poor-house class. Every body belonging to it folded the garments he happened to have on a little closer to him, crept a little nearer to the fire, and was thankful if the cold of December could be endured on gruels, pale cider, beef-bone soup, hard neck and grizzly pieces of beef, rusty pork and cheap beans, in quantities proportioned to the cost.

*As the wintry weather pinched more and more, all*



the stragglers, one after another, who in mild weather wandered off and got their living—some by begging, others by working a little, and some by stealing and light pilfering—came in from their excursions, and took up with their old quarters at the poor-house. Among these came old *Mag Davis*, hag that she was—an out and out piece of sinful and wretched humanity. So came in John and Polly Tucker, gipsies in their mode of life. And there were two or three orphan children, ragged and dirty and ignorant. Vicious women and wicked men came, and all who could make out a good claim on the town staid : others passed on.

The snow began to fall. Captain Bunce ordered out into the fields, and yards, and woods, all the hands who could be of any service, and made Bill and Dan, and Boyce and Tucker and Jims accomplish a good deal of work, while Mrs. Bunce compelled the women and more infirm men to help her about house. "You must work," said she, "or starve ; we can't feed idle bodies."

In vain the poor creatures complained ; work was good for them, and it cost a world of money to keep them. Captain Bunce could not afford to keep them if they were to render him no service. Captain Bunce discharged his hired man, and told Dick and Elisha to make "the folks" do his work.

A cold hard day closing in with snow and rain, gathered the miserable, wretched paupers into their hovel. But Jims dripping with rain and covered with snow, brought in some large armfuls of brush, chips, and a log or two which were cast on the fire. The flames flashed up into the chimney, and threw their bright light into the large, comfortless room. A single taper burned in an iron candlestick. The forms of the inmates seated singly, and in groups, or lounging here and there, and moving

through the room, cast shadows in very grotesque shapes along the soiled walls, and creaking floor.

On the whole, it was the happiest hour of the twenty-four for them, for the eating of the day was over, a rather self-denying operation, the labor was over, sleep was at hand. Yet the society was not entirely homogeneous, except in the one item of poverty, and as the elements of discord are not always absent in the best of families, how could they be thought always absent here, in a group of characters never before in their best days quite affiliating together? It is true, however, that common misfortune often makes common friends, and here were friendships grown and growing into some form and comeliness, where the normal condition was one of repugnance. For instance, aunt Prescott was become every body's friend, and in her every other person learned to have some friendship for his fellows. Aunt Dorothy Prinsmade possessed some kindness of heart, and tried to serve her companions. All felt a community of sentiment, and regarded themselves at liberty to prey on the interests of the rest of the world. Their condition gave them little hope of ever rising above want, and to satisfy this, they bound themselves together to accomplish what they could. Yet not in form. They took no common oath, nor made any common plunder. It was in the feeling of the heart that they foraged on society, and bound themselves together, not in formal covenant.

It was seven o'clock. All the chores were done, the people all in—but Roxy. She had slipped out, a wildish saucy faced girl, under-witted they called her, and sometimes uncontrollable—she went and came as she liked. Neither for her, nor for any other one of their number was there *ever felt any very great uneasiness of mind when ab-*

sent, how long soever that absence might be continued. She has not a relative in the world that she can name, nor has she a solitary farthing in money.

Most of the company gathered near the fire, turning this way and that, to feel its genial heat, Jims industriously supplying fuel. They maintained quite a conversation among themselves, the general drift of which was in complaint of their present lot, or mourning over their departed happiness.

"How the cold comes in under the doors, and through that broken window," said Boyce, who had thrown himself on the old bed, and tried to cover up his shivering limbs.

"Jims," said he, "take my old hat and crowd it into that broken window, will ye? It's plaguy chilly here."

Jims did so, and at the same time heaped more fuel on the fire.

"It is a cold night, Mr. Boyce," said widow Prescott, "and a lot of poor souls like us feel it. For my part, I should have relished a cup of hot tea to-night; and I think it would have done you good."

"Hot tea, Mrs. Prescott!" said the other; "when the paupers of Crampton get what they like and need to eat and drink, somebody beside Captain Isaac Bunce will have the care of them."

"*That's a fact!*" screamed a voice in the rear of a group near the fire, which all knew to be that of Mag Davis. "*That's a fact!*" she exclaimed, coming forward a little, and sitting down on one of the old chairs near the foot of the bed—"Captain Bunce's tea bill," said she, "won't swamp him, I'll swear."

Mag was an uncommonly hard and desperate character. Not that there never appeared another like her. This we do not mean, but that she was one of her own





MAG DAVIS

class, and that a very depraved one. Similar personages are now and then seen in all our public institutions. They have a character formed in the streets, formed in the schools of licentiousness and unrestrained self-indulgence. Mag Davis was once a handsome girl. All her youthful history we do not pretend to know. Write it we would not if known to us. Sufficient be it, that there is ONE record kept of every mortal life, and of her life of course. We know her as Mag Davis. She would pass for a female ; her long dangling hair spoke this of her, and in her face were yet some feminine traceries—enough to warm your heart to her, at least in compassion, if there were wanting nothing to deaden its emotions. But ugliness, recklessness, and ferocity mingled their expression in her face, and lurked in her eyes. She wore tattered and draggled skirts, and nothing in her person was more pleasing than in the character of her mind. She was an ugly old crone, yet she knew a great deal, and could converse with great fluency. And now she sat rather back in the group, at the foot of the bedstead, crowded partly into a corner, half hidden by the slouching form of John Tucker, drunken and debauched as he was, and Polly, his miserable, red-faced wife, who had both lately found winter quarters at the poor-house. Here, in the faintly lighted portion of the room, she sat and snapped her fingers in the air, higgling and hitching and swaying this way and that, jerking her head violently and spasmodically from one side to another, and often leading off, in a rapid, screaming voice, the conversation of the miserable and haggard wretches around her. Her conversational power, as we have said, was great. She could frame good sentences, and express them with an emphasis of earnestness that made one regard them, and with intonations of voice peculiar

to well-bred ladies. But yet she was a polluted wretch. Her life had been one of criminal self-indulgence—her associations vile and wretched. A female, without the grace of one—with no outlines remaining of virtue, loveliness, attraction—you saw her but with loathing. With squinting eyes she leered on you, and opened her toothless jaws to utter words.

Whatever character or position she may once have borne, she is now *here*, without delicacy, purity, softness, fear, love, or hope. She is one of the paupers of Crampton. The authorities have her in their charge. It makes no sort of difference with them what else she is, was, or might be. She costs the town so many dollars a year to keep her as she is !

Poor thing, though ! She has a human soul and body, although these things are not, in her case, very well defined ; and she is a lost, doomed one. She is as certain to die a forgotten, toothless hag, an old gone-by crone, a coarsely fed and shabbily dressed sinner, as ever certain was to any one of mortal name or kind. And prayers for the poor in the church mean not such as she ! Her class is forgotten—is too hopeless—is on the town—is provided for already. Her class is the degraded one known only in law, not in charity—a class sold to the public bidder—sold out of Christian communities and Christian relationships, into the charnel-house—sold to save church-going members, and all religious people of all religious denominations, if possible, one, two, or three per cent. additional tax on the grand list. Call not the poor-house we speak of a Christian institution. Its cruelties, its sufferings, its neglect, its forgotten, prayerless state point it out as one of the common and degraded institutions of selfishness, though planted in the very *soil of New England*.

"Hot tea and coffee, Mr. Boyce, you'll get enough of it in the other world," said Mag, rocking her body backwards and forwards, and crossing her feet. "But those things are only for the rich in this world. Poor folks must not complain if they have cold victuals. All that's wanted is to keep the life in them, no matter whether the blood is warm or not."

"It's a confounded lie," said old Dan, who was holding his place close to the chimney corner, and as usual chewing a large piece of tobacco. "Poor folks are's good as any body. Who cares for the rich? Burn down their house, and they are as poor as the rest ov us. And for my part, I love to see a good smart fire."

"Oh! pshaw, now, Dan, don't talk of incendiarism in your old age; one state prison job, I should think, would do for you," replied the hag.

"State prison's a palace to this rotten affair, and ten thousand like it. You never 'll deserve to go there, d—— you."

"It must be a grand place," said she, "it costs a great deal to educate folks there, especially so cursedly deserving ones as old Dan."

"Go to ——," growled that worthy and said no more.

Poor old widow Prescott! How she sighed as she saw and heard all this, and thought of by-gone days. But aunt Prescott was a good deal broken, and her sensitiveness not as formerly. Yet she groaned and turned away saying, "The Lord have mercy on 'us." Aunt Dorothy quietly smoked her pipe, and neither said anything nor offered a line of song.

As for poor Boyce the author, he was really unwell, and a little help would have done him good. He groaned on the bed, and said he was cold.

"Well now, the Lord bless you and send deliverance,"



said the good widow, trying to make him a little more comfortable. You shall have more clothes on your bed, and we'll heat a brick at the fire and warm your feet."

So saying, she brought a blanket from her own room, and threw it over him, and Jims got out of the ashes a warm brick, which they managed to roll up in a cloth, and applied to his feet. And this was scarcely done before the creaking outside door swung open, and the slight form of Henrietta glided into the room. She bore in her hand a bowl of hot tea, which she had prevailed on her mother to make, and send over to the "folks."

Aunt Dorothy, before unmoved, and careless, apparently, as to the condition of every thing around her, now suddenly laid aside her pipe, and jumping to her feet, exclaimed—"The Lord's heard your prayers, Miss Prescott, and sent deliverance to Boyce, as he did of old to Peter, ha! ha!

"Drum, drum, drum; praise ye the Lord,  
Drum, de drum, drum, dro; with one consent,  
Drum, drum, dro."

"Mr. Boyce!" shrieked Mag, "your tea's come, and I believe the Lord's angels went right after it when they heard us talking. For my part, I always believed the angels had a mighty deal to do with us in this world."

"They've kept a good account of you, I'll swear!" grumbled Dan.

"Ha! ha! ha!" shrieked the hag—"set a thief to catch a thief."

After Boyce had taken his tea, aunt Prescott covered him up as warmly as possible, and he declared he never *felt* better in his life. He really began to perspire, and soon fell into a sound sleep. Henrietta glided from the room and went home.

Still the evening's storm kept on, though not a very hard and driving one. It was winter's fore-paw, and with it he kept scratching at the windows and doors, and seeking for admission to every body's house and room.

Mr. and Mrs. Haddock, having thought all day of going over to the poor-house in the evening, were not prevented by the storm. As they turned from the street and passed an open lot leading to the gate of the grounds, they encountered Dick Bunce and Roxy, sauntering off together in high glee.

"A young rascal, bent on mischief, and sure to find it," said Mr. Haddock, when fairly past them. "And how do you all find yourselves to-night?" he inquired, stepping in among the paupers.

The whole company started at the sound of his voice, as though it were the voice of a deliverer, and especially at the sweet words that fell from the lips of his wife, as she tenderly took the hand of Mrs. Prescott and embraced her, and went among them all with kindly and encouraging words.

"We are doing tolerably well, I believe," said Mrs. Prescott, "but the cold creeps in, and we feel it some in our poor bodies—"

"Here's Boyce sick abed," shouted Mag, "but Boyce 'll come up again if he can have good care, and nourishing food and drink."

"Well, those he ought to, and shall have; how long has he been sick?"

"He's always ailing, you know, but he's been shaking and feverish about two hours—and two hours is enough to end a pauper, you know, ha! ha! ha!"

"He is better, much better, Mrs. Haddock," said the widow, "since Henrietta brough' him in a cup of hot tea."

"Did she, sweet girl!"

"The Lord's best blessing on *her*," said aunt Dorothy.

"Drum, drum, drum."

"She's Captain Bunce's best side," said Mag.

"We put a hot brick to his feet, too," said the widow ;  
"see, he's asleep now, and in a good sweat."

"He has a good, warm blanket on him, too," said Mr. Haddock.

"Miss Prescott got that for him, off her own bed," said Mag, "and how in the world she's going to lie warm without it the Lord knows, not I."

"And so you don't have every thing here you could desire, after all?" inquired Mr. Haddock.

"We don't starve, sir, by no means, nor do we suffer the want of clothing as many do, but it is not as it once was," said Mrs. Prescott.

"You have good meat to eat once a day?"

"We have generally some meat," said she.

"Tough as the side of a barn," said Tucker.

"Salt as the sea," said Polly.

"Bought on a speculation," said Dan.

"Good enough," said Bill and Jims, "for poor folks."

"It 'll last more than one generation," said Mag ; "as for my eating it, I never 'll eat a pound of it if I stay here a thousand years."

"What have you had to-day, Mag?" inquired he.

"Had! Hog's liver, and bone soup, and cider," said she.

"What's Boyce eaten?"

"Boyce has eaten his finger nails," said she.

"Has he had nothing?"

"Nothing he could relish. He drank a quart of cider, *and just now* two mugs of tea, but he has not eaten a bit *of any food this twenty-four hours.*"

"Why don't he eat?"

"He can't."

"What's the reason?"

"Don't have the food he likes, I s'pose."

"Is he failing? Is he so sick he can't eat?"

"He's a slender body, sir, and can't endure as much as some of us can," answered the widow. "He really wants nursing, like a child—a good and kind home—good care, good and nourishing food, would save him."

"Give him some more beef—Savage's beef," said old Dan. "That's what Captain Bunce calls hearty food and nourishing."

"Ha! ha! ha!" shouted Mag.

Boyce began to move and be disturbed in his sleep.

"Don't, for the world, wake him," said Mrs. Prescott. And aunt Dorothy chimed in her lullaby, as follows:

"Drum, drum, drum, hush my dear,  
Dro, di, dro, dro, dro, lie still and slumber—  
Dro, drum, drum, drum, holy angels,  
Rattle, te drum, drum, drum, guard thy bed."

Mr. and Mrs. Haddock went softly to his bed and examined him. They found him evidently much sick, and requiring medical attention, as well as good and careful nursing. They resolved to remove him to their own house, if Captain Bunce was willing, on the morrow.

"Well, then, I see how it is, good people," said Mr. Haddock. "Sometimes you have enough to eat and drink, at other times are rather short, eh? Isn't it so?"

"Something so," said Tucker; "only the poor-house is never *over* well fed."

"No, no: so I understand. Well, how is it for warmth—are you warm enough?"

"Can't say we are," said Bill. "The house is old, and

fuel light—clothes thin, rather—nights long. We feel cold nights."

"Then you don't have clothes enough? You ought to have a blanket or two, and some two or three comforters, to each bed."

"Whew!" screamed Mag. "That's more than we've all got—ain't it, Dan?"

"Blankets and comforters are scarce in my quarters," said he, "the Lord knows."

"Cold weather has come on rather suddenly, you know, Mrs. Prescott," said Mrs. Haddock, "and perhaps the Captain isn't prepared yet to make every thing as comfortable as he will by-and-bye."

"We don't know how it is," said she, in reply; "but my trust is in the Lord of Hosts. I know that this is a suffering world. The Lord Jesus suffered here. He had no where to lay *his* head. How much are we the better off than he, the Lord of Glory!"

It seemed to flash like a new revelation from heaven into the minds of Mr. and Mrs. Haddock, that there was peculiar sin in suffering an institution so poorly (or badly) managed as this to exist among them; and that this old saint, and others like her, would rise up at the last as swift witness against them if they neglected to do their work of mercy and reform—if they forgot the misery that some here suffered, who they believed were truly the children of God, and all undeserving the neglect of those who could relieve them. They resolved in the future to do more for them than they had done hitherto.

Jims now threw a fresh armful of brush on the fire, and a fine warm glow was diffused through the room. *Just at this instant*, who should blunder in but Captain *Bunce*, the merciful and humane landlord of this estab-

lishment! He was just enough in liquor to be good-humored and familiar, and did not at first observe Mr. and Mrs. Haddock.

"Well, now, I declare," said he, "if this isn't just the smilingest looking place I've been in for a week. Jims, give me a chair.—Ah, Mr. Had—dock—and Mrs. Haddock! I vow, this is nice! Why, how in the world did you get out this stormy night? I'll be hanged if I ain't dreadfully obliged to you, and glad to see you. Draw up by the fire. Now, ain't this sort of cheerful? Jims, don't spare the wood; put on the best you can find, and 'nough on't. It's sort of cold out doors, but in here it's as warm and pleasant as a May morning. You see, our folks are pretty comfortable here, friend Haddock. Give me one of these large old-fashioned chimney fire-places, and plenty of wood, (Jims, put on the wood,) and it's a thousand times better than one of your modern six-by-eight close stoves for coal—ha! ha! ha! Don't you think so, Mr. Haddock?"

"I don't like small stoves very well, I allow," said he.

"You are just of my opinion," replied Bunce. "Stoves are unhealthy, coal is unhealthy, and every *body* is unhealthy who has any thing to do with them. Well, I'm right glad to see you, and you musn't say 'no,' you must both go in and make my wife a call when you leave. Here you see the 'folks' are all doing charmingly, all growing fat, and young, and sprightly—how is it, Bill?"

"Yes, sir: bery?" said the black with a slight nod of the head.

"I thought so, ha! ha! ha!" shouted the Captain. "Well," said he, "suppose you just drop in and see us—hey?—eh, Mrs. Haddock, what say?"

"I have no particular objection, if Mr. Haddock can spend *the time*."

"Oh! hang the 'time.' 'Time' is nothing. I have more time on my hands than I want—absolutely so now. Why, my evenings are often as long, and dull as Bill's face, and it does me good to see a friend."

"Before we leave," said Mr. Haddock, "perhaps you would like to see a little how Boyce is getting on, for he appears to be sick, and I understand you sent him in a nice cup of hot tea to-night."

"Did I, by jove, that's a new idea, ha! ha! I guess I did though, or, perhaps Mrs. Bunce and Hetty looked out for the poor souls. Boyce! Boyce! let's see, oh! the devil, yes, Boyce. He's a little in the dumps, but he'll rouse again in the morning as good as new. Aunt Prescott! how's Boyce?"

"He's doing better, sir, I think."

"Yes, that's the case," said the Captain, returning from his bedside. "You see he's all nice and warm, well blanketed, and fast asleep, doing well. He'll be as bright as a new cent in the morning; we keep the folks here, Mr Haddock, all warm and comfortable these cold nights."

"Then you aim to give them all a blanket, and warm bed-clothes?" said Mr. Haddock.

"Oh!—of—*course* we keep them well-to-do these cold nights. (Put on the wood, Jims.) We get on them just as much as the poor critters will bear."

"That's a lie," screamed Mag.

"So it is, by —," said Dan and Tucker in a breath, and aunt Dorothy commenced a song forthwith.

At this moment the door suddenly flew open, and in came Dick and Roxy, in a half angry scuffle without noticing the company present.

The Captain, glad of any interruption, turned, and *peremptorily* inquired: "What's this mean, Dick?"

"Oh! nothing, only Rox and I have been on a gale this evening, and she's got my watch."

"Take your watch, hatefulless," said she, throwing it at him, and disappeared up the stairs.

Mr. and Mrs. Haddock, perceived that Captain Bunce was too much intoxicated, to make it profitable to talk with him or to prolong their visit. Under the excuse of the storm too, as they all left the house, they declined his pressing invitation to call at his residence, and as fast as possible, made their way home.

The poor folks got through the night as they best could. Jims laid himself down by the fire on an old blanket, and kept the fire up through the night. Bill slept at the foot of the bed, and kept the sick man's feet warm.

During its dark hours, an emigrant ship from Liverpool went ashore on the Jersey coast, a perfect wreck. Few were saved of either crew or passengers; among the latter, a lady and her child five years old, were rescued and taken care of, of whom we may hear more by and bye.

As soon as the storm subsided, Mr. Haddock conveyed Boyce to his own house, where under careful attention he in a little time began to amend.



## CHAPTER XII.

THE Ladies' Benevolent Society. Miss E. Flush, President.

ONE of those very common and very praiseworthy modes of doing good, which accomplish by association of effort what is seldom brought about by the individual alone, which one society of ladies takes up after another, and so the action of the whole is as leaven, leavening the mass—one of these, we say, was in full and satisfactory experiment among the ladies of Crampton. It was two or three days, it might have been five, for it was on Friday evening that the storm came, and the ladies usually met on Wednesday—call it five days then, after the visit of Mr. and Mrs. Haddock at the poor-house, that an unusually large number of ladies met at the house of Esquire Ben. Stout, prepared with thread and needles to do a great amount of sewing before they separated.

Mrs. Stout and her maiden sister, Miss Emeline Flush, particularly the latter, and Mrs. Stout's two daughters, Judith and Hope, were devotedly attached to this benevolent association. Not unfrequently they all went out and passed the afternoon session, and some of them the evening, let the meeting be where it might, industriously plying the needle, wielding the scissors, and imparting as well as receiving information on the great point of Christian benevolence.

It must be confessed that their aim and result were both alike good, and that the ladies generally were governed by the highest considerations in their enterprise.

If they committed an error, it was in shooting beyond a point of necessity, and rendering help in one case to the neglect of another. But the Stouts, the Haddocks, the Phillips, the Boutwells, the Hayes, the Smiths, the Newcombes, the Scranneys, the Shires, and the Lincolns, were most of them regarded as sensible and benevolent minded families, some of the ladies living daily to do good to their fellow-men, with some perhaps trifling dissimilarity of views as to the mode. On the Wednesday we have specified, the society met at Esq. Ben. Stout's. Mrs. Haddock and her daughters arrived a little later than usual, on account of driving round by the poor-house on their way, to make particular inquiries about the winter clothing of the paupers. The room was full of ladies, and they were, as usual at these sessions, chatty enough.

Every body seemed very happy to see Mrs. Haddock and her daughters. They were indeed of great service in the society, Mrs. Haddock being one of the main officers, and a sort of right arm to the enterprise, while Frances, her eldest daughter, was treasurer and secretary of the society.

So the ladies fluttered around them on their arrival, and protested that they should have felt lonesome, and the work would not have been half done without them. Mrs. Stout said she never felt reconciled to it if Mrs. Haddock was absent when the ladies held their meeting, especially if it was at her house. And Mrs. Haddock never thought for a moment of not coming, she regretted being late, but was unavoidably detained. Jane Phillips, one of the sweetest girls in Crampton, folded her friend Frances Haddock in her arms, and in a snug corner of the room they plied their needles and chatted together for a long time.

Thirty or forty ladies, met together in a sewing circle, do a good deal of work. They also "work off" a large amount of conversation, and it is pleasing to be among them and to listen to the talk, if you cannot add to it.

"I am told," said Miss Flush, "that after we complete our present work, and fill this box for the missionaries, Mr. Longwell, the merchant, wishes the society to engage to sew for him the next three months."

"Why, Miss Flush!" exclaimed several voices.

"Is it possible!"

"Can it be true?" inquired others at the same time.

"Yes," said Miss Flush, "he applied to me this morning, and said he had a contract with a city jobber for three hundred summer coats, pants, and vests, for the spring trade, and five hundred shirts and bosoms."

"Did you ever see such luck!" exclaimed several.

"It is most too good to be true," said others.

"It shows us," said Mrs. Haddock, "that if we are willing to busy ourselves to do good, we shall not be deprived of the opportunity."

"How true, Mrs. Haddock," replied Mrs. Ben. Stout.

"I wish we could go right about it," said one.

"How much will Mr. Longwell be willing to pay us for the work?" inquired Mrs. Phillips.

"Of course that will depend on the style of the sewing, and on the quality and cut of the garments. He will give us twenty-five cents each for shirts made in good style, with bosoms and wristbands, the work all cut out; and twenty-five cents each for thin pants and vests cut, and fifty cents for best coats."

The ladies all stopped their work and listened during this recital, and resumed it again, with sundry exclamations, as Miss Flush finished speaking.

"*It is a good deal of money, doubtless,*" said old Mrs.

Hayes, looking over her spectacles, and frowning up her forehead, as she smiled round the room ; " but, ladies, when I was young, we never made a coat for less than a dollar, nor pants for less than fifty cents ; while every body gave us fifty cents to make a shirt."

" Well, nobody gives now as much as formerly, you know, Mrs. Hayes," pleasantly put in Mrs. Stout. " Besides, the cloth is different, and the sewing is different. We hurry off work now-a-days ; in those old times, it was a week's work to earn a dollar."

Mrs. Hayes said the times were different, she knew.

The ladies thought they could make something by Mr. Longwell's job, although the prices were low. It was a great relief to have the work all cut and ready for them ; and besides, every one would know before hand just what work was to be undertaken.

" How much longer will it take us, Miss Flush," inquired Mrs. Haddock, " to finish our present work for the missionaries ?"

" I do not know exactly. Shouldn't you think, Miss Lincoln and Mrs. Smith, that we might get this work done in two weeks ?"

Mrs. Smith hadn't thought much about it. She now began to consider, and to reckon up and form her estimates.

" Why, Miss Flush," said she, " we have three pair of sheets made already ; we have two pair of gent's pants, and three pair boy's pants, and two vests done. We have two ladies' dresses, two thick quilts, three flannel petticoats, four chemise, four night-gowns, six pair stockings, caps, gloves, thread, needles, shoes, embroidered slippers, two bed-blankets, one large bed-quilt—these are all ready, you know—and this one in the works. Then there are making four shirts, four under-shirts,

three pair stockings, ten towels, two children's frocks, and a silk mantilla. Yes, I should think—shouldn't you, Mrs. Newton and Mrs. Phillips?—I rather think in two meetings more we may get through. I haven't thought of it. What do *you* think, Miss Flush?"

Miss Flush thought they might in three, if not in two. So thought Mrs. Smith; and this seemed to be the prevailing opinion, all the ladies putting their work in their laps, and listening to Mrs. Smith's summary of their labors with opened eyes and mouths.

"Did you ever see such an amount of work done by the society before?" inquired Jane Phillips of her friend, Frances Haddock.

"It's a great deal, I tell you," said she, with a little shake of her head, and a soberish expression, as she plied faster and faster her needle.

"I do think," said Mrs. Newton, "that we shall make some good Christian missionary and his family very comfortable indeed, when our box is received by them."

"Undoubtedly!" exclaimed Mrs. Stout, in the fulness of her zeal and faith. Now Mrs. Stout kept running out and in all the time, as she was very busy with her servant and girls, preparing the ladies' tea. In some societies of this kind tea and biscuit are dispensed with, the ladies working hard and eating nothing, to save trouble and unnecessary charges. But it was not so here. Every lady at her house gave her friends a good tea; and that custom we, for some reason, seem to like best ourselves.

Mrs. Stout fully believed that the box of clothing, etc., etc., they were preparing for the missionaries, would do some poor individuals, laboring in much want and trouble, "a deal of good"—full as much good as the *labor cost to prepare it* protracted through the last half

of the year—and so doubtless it might. Mrs. Stout gave her principal attention to this box of clothing for the missionaries, and was a little surprised, on coming into the room, to hear the ladies conversing about their own poor in the town.

Mrs. Phillips said there was a family in her neighborhood of very decent people, who were sick and in rather reduced circumstances, who she knew were in want of clothing, and another family she had heard of who were short of provisions.

"Oh, well, Mrs. Phillips, the poor we always have with us, you know," said Mrs. Stout; "and for my part, I hope the ladies will let nobody suffer; though it seems to me we had better get off the box before we attempt to do much for any other persons."

"It is true that we may weaken all our plans by having too many," said Mrs. Phillips; "but as it is now cold weather, and they immediately need some help, I think we had better consider their case, especially as we do not know where the box is to be sent; and it is somewhat doubtful whether it will now get forwarded at all till the spring opens."

"Oh, let us labor in hope, dear Mrs. Phillips," said the other. "Nothing casts a greater gloom over a society than discouraging intimations of that sort. Now I firmly believe the box will be immediately despatched—the committee are so much in want of clothing, and are so pressing in their demands. But, dear me! I forgot my ——"

And away flew Mrs. Stout to look after her scorching biscuit.

The discussion of the poor families in town went on; and it saddened the heart of Mrs. Haddock as the theme changed to that of fashions and dress in particular, to

see how entirely forgotten were the wretched, miserable paupers at that very moment suffering the ills of poverty in the poor-house of Crampton.

When the conversation allowed it, she informed Miss Flush that one reason why she had inquired about the time that would be required to complete the missionary work, was from a desire that the ladies might afterwards, if they saw fit, do some work for "that other class of poor people in town, quite often overlooked, the town paupers."

"The poor creatures!" exclaimed Mrs. Smith, Mrs. Newton, Miss Lincoln, Miss Flush, both the Misses Scranney, and Mrs. Shire.

"I forgot entirely there were any such persons among us," said Miss Flush, the president of the society.

"And I am sure I never considered that it was our duty to look after the town poor," said Mrs. Shire.

"No, nor I," said Mrs. Smith. "Does not the town support them, Mrs. Haddock?"

"The town nominally takes care of the paupers," said she. "It pays Captain Bunce so many dollars a year to support them; but it makes no adequate provision for their enjoyment and comfort."

"Why, I am utterly surprised to hear of that!" said Mrs. Newton. "My husband has repeatedly, time and again, informed me that the town was very generous in its support of the poor. He says it is a great tax on the people, and that they feel it."

"I don't know how that is," replied Mrs. Haddock, "but I do know that the poor in that institution have been, many of them, in circumstances far more comfortable than they now are—as the widow Prescott, for example, whose husband was once a deacon in this *church*—and that they now are in great want of the

most common clothing, of nourishing food, and comfortable rooms ; in short, of every thing to make life to one of us desirable."

Mrs. Stout had again entered. She was overwhelmed at the statement. Her husband was one of the overseers of the poor, and she didn't know how many, many times he had told her, that the paupers were leading a very comfortable life of it *for them*. "He always said, however," she continued, "that they were a rather depraved set of beings, and past hope, that we couldn't do much, if anything to improve them."

"Mrs. Stout," said her friend, "I have been among them often. I called there to-day, on my ride here. I know that they are in the most pitiable plight in the world. It is true that many of them are morally depraved, and almost hopeless of good, perhaps entirely so as they now are, but among them there are very decent persons, whose greatest crime is that they are unmeasurably poor, and friendless, and weak-minded. They are as low in poverty as any body can ever get in this world, being wholly dependent on charity for every comfort or necessary they enjoy. We have by great exertion induced Captain Bunce to allow us to take home one of the sick men, Mr. Boyce—you don't know him, do you?"

Every body was silent—no one seemed to recollect the name.

"True," she went on to say, "you don't know him. But in our village library, and on more than one of your parlor tables, ladies, I have seen a popular work, of which he is the author—at the present time, without a change of clothes, without flannels, without good shoes, or hat, with nearly worn out coat and pants, in poor feeble *health, and weak in mind*, Boyce is one of the paupers. *We have him now under our roof.*"



Mrs. Hays raised both her hands and eyes in astonishment, so did Mrs. Newton, Miss Flush, Miss Lincoln, and every other lady, for Mrs. Haddock enjoyed their confidence and respect. They all again, and again, protested their utter ignorance of any such circumstance of poverty among them, and showered on Mrs. Haddock their thanks for taking care of him. They had no idea there was any particular suffering there, the more especially as Captain Bunce was said to be a very humane sort of a man.

"It is true of them, my friends," said Mrs. Haddock, "that they all want warmer under-clothing than they now have, and warmer bedding. They are very poorly protected against the approaching cold weather, having nothing to wear, that is different from their fall and summer clothing. And we know that such feeble and aged persons cannot live so."

The conversation was interrupted, by the arrival of the pastor with his wife. The usual salutations were forthwith gone into, and a happy smile diffused itself over the group, as the new comers exerted themselves to say something agreeable to every one. Nor had they been long present, ere Mrs. Stout again, and again appearing, now announced 'tea.' The whole company gathered around the well loaded tables of Mrs. Stout, and Mr. Rodman, their pastor, implored the Divine blessing. Then as afterwards in his prayer, he was careful to remember the poor, on whom he implored the best mercies of heaven. But it was evident to Mrs. Haddock, and to nearly every other lady present, whose mind had been aroused to think of the paupers, that his petitions had no reference whatever to them, but to the *worthier* poor in the families about town, or to the *great family of poverty*, represented, not in the tangible

poor-houses, but in the mere idea of poverty, which the mind is wont to indulge on that subject. "We in our prayers for the poor," thought she, "pray either for those we cannot reach, a class of humanity in the abstract, or for those among us, but little our inferiors, to assist whom confers honor on ourselves. We overlook the poor who cannot recompense us again."

When a fit opportunity offered, she again brought up the subject, and particularly to the notice of her pastor.

"Well," said he, "this is a singular state of things indeed. I have long been aware of the incongruity of our poor-house system and our Christian benevolence, but I have never seen the thing exactly right, have never felt, acted, prayed aright over it."

"We have all, Mr. Rodman, too much overlooked this class of our fellow-beings. If they are old offenders and morally vile, they are still worthy of Christian commiseration and effort. And certainly there ought to be some arrangement to separate the more depraved and hardened of both sexes from the society of those who are simply the victims of misfortune, without any loss of virtuous and moral principle—and especially ought the more youthful, the boys and girls, to be kept separate from the older inmates who are vulgar and profane."

Mrs. Haddock told the ladies that if they were willing to devote any time to relieve the wants of the poor by sewing, she should be happy to unite with them, and would invite them to her house. Several professed a willingness to do so. But Miss Flush thought the ladies had better finish the missionary box first, and in this opinion some others warmly coincided. Mrs. Shire, a little aside, declared that as for the old paupers, they were a miserable, swearing, drinking set any way, and she had *seen enough of them*. Many of the ladies, how-

ever, promised immediately to send Mrs. Haddock parcels of second-hand clothing for them, and this promise was not entirely broken. She was able to make several of the poor creatures far more comfortable than they had been, through the liberality of her friends.

But Mrs. Haddock was not permitted to have the whole ground to herself. By-and-bye in came Mr. Ben. Stout himself, first selectman of Crampton, overseer of the poor, etc., etc. Of course Mr. Stout knew every thing that any body else did about the paupers, and a little more—certainly much more than any lady of the town could be supposed to.

Rev. Mr. Rodman appealed to Mr. Stout in behalf of the poor, and asked if something more could not be done for them.

"As for that matter," said he in reply, "there is a great deal of what we may call mawkish sympathy expressed in behalf of these paupers. Now we must admit that they are human beings. This is an evident truth. Secondly : They are poor and miserable. No one can deny this. Thirdly : They have made themselves so—almost equally a self-evident truth. Fourthly : They need help. Now, in my opinion, these are the important points in their history, and cover the whole ground. Out of this summary grows the following idea, viz., 'It's the duty of the town to support the paupers.' We come, then, to view the matter from this very clear point, and we see that what is the duty of the town, is not the duty of the individual. So, as an individual, *I* feel no responsibility in this case. As a member of the community, I give my vote to lay a tax sufficient to answer all the reasonable charges of this unfriended class of persons, and *commit* the keeping of them, for a valuable consideration, to *A, B, or C*, as the case may be. If, then, I have done

*my* duty as a man of the community, what further call can there in reason be made on *me*, eh?"

"Ah—well—er—" said the minister, being a little befogged.

"Yes, you see it's just here. They are hopelessly poor, and want boosting all the time. Now we can't be always running after them. They are done with. Society can't expect any thing further from them. And all we can do, you know, Mrs. Haddock, it's about so, after all—all we can do, is to put them where they'll be, *on the whole*, in a comfortable sort of a condition; eh, say so?"

Mrs. Haddock couldn't bear that their clergyman should carry away just that impression of the paupers from so respectable a source likewise, and she answered Mr. Stout as a Christian woman should.

"But, my dear sir, these are our own fellow-beings. They are poor and dependent, I admit, and are, some of them, even vicious and ill-deserving; but ours is a duty not so easily surrendered to the town, as you seem to regard it. We certainly, as a town, are in duty bound to take care of them, and to show them such care as is worthy the name; but as individuals who receive daily mercies from God, and mercies we do not, nor can deserve, we are bound to reach out to them the helping-hand, and to make their path to the grave as comfortable as lies in our power."

Mr. Rodman assented to this. He now began to get the fog a little from his eyes, and his heart began to respond to the earnest pleadings of gospel mercy. But Esq. Stout maintained that we might feel too deeply, and do too much. "The fact is, Mrs. Haddock, where'll you stop? There must be some stopping-place, you know. Now give old Tucker and Polly a new dress to-day, and *they'll* want another to-morrow. Give Jim a

new suit this fall, and he must have another next spring. And so you go on : no stopping-place, you see. if you once begin."

"Then ought we to begin at all, Mr. Stout, if we can not pursue our intentions to the end? I do not see how the town may feel liberated from a full and proper care of the poor, if it assumes it at the first."

"It is something so," said the Squire. "And I—am—rather of the opinion—that is—I have been so—that you will find, on inquiry, that our poor folks are, *on the whole*—you understand, we must lump these things, you know—about as well cared for as the poor ever are—or can be. It costs the town seven hundred dollars to take care of them : that's a large sum in these days. And *really*, Mrs. Haddock, what do they want?"

This was said with such an earnest manner, and betrayed so true ignorance of their real condition, that she replied, directly—

*"They want the very things the town pays for!"*

The countenance of Squire Stout immediately fell. His conscience told him she was right, and that the town had bargained for the support of its helpless poor, to take suitable care of them—meaning good and kind care—but that its chief desire, after all, had been to hire them out, so as to cost the town the least possible sum, so as to be sure of hearing nothing further of them.

"Yes," said she—and all the other ladies listened, and now and then said a few words—"the town, Mr. Stout, wishes them kept in a suitable manner, and pays seven hundred dollars that they may be so kept. But is it fulfilling the contract to pinch them in fuel, bedding, nursing, and medicine, and to feed them on the coarsest *of beef*, and the very worst pieces of the slaughter-

house? on unmerchutable ham and pork, on tainted butter, and food, in general, revolting to the taste? But the poor here, and every where in similar circumstances, are so kept."

"Oh—well—hang it, Mrs. Haddock—but then, you see—they are a plaguy ugly set to have any thing to do with. And God—in mercy to them, as I think—has made them less sensitive to these matters than other folks are, so they wouldn't mind it at all—as we may say—if—that is, I rather think so—if somebody didn't tell them of it. Don't you think so, Mr. Rodman?"

Like all clergymen, Rev. Mr. Rodman felt himself a sort of town pauper, dependent on the salary which the good will of his people gave him. That salary was small enough, in all good reason, as he well knew, to meet his wants; but it was better than none, and he honestly believed it was fairly his due. Squire Stout was one of his particular friends, and he did not like to differ from him in a point where the Squire might be supposed to have some sensitiveness. On the other hand, Mrs. Haddock was also one of his particularly kind friends, and a lady of very great superiority of character. He did not know at first what to say, and he was on the point of taking the usual course of half this and half that, attempting some pacificatory remarks, when he encountered the mildly beaming eye and calm, expressive countenance of his own wife, who sat at her ease among the ladies, a little at the other side of the room. Mr. Rodman was not the only one who, in like circumstances, has felt a wife's support; even though she may not offer a word, her look has often been enough to strengthen the heart of one who trusteth in her. And so Mr. Rodman, as he encountered the calm, yet speaking countenance of his wife, *read there in an instant his duty, and replied, as any man ought—*

"I think, Squire Stout, that it is our duty to befriend them, to repent of our indifference to them, and for the future, to treat them as though they were bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh. They certainly deserve from this Christian community every degree of attention consistent with our means ; and so far are they, in my opinion, from wanting in sensitiveness on this point, they feel, more than any body else can feel for them, their degradation and sufferings."

Mrs. Rodman rewarded her husband with a smile and a tear. Mrs. Haddock and Mr. Stout prolonged the conversation awhile, the latter affirming that there must be some mistake in Mrs. Haddock's estimate of their sufferings and destitution, because Captain Bunce was a merciful and humane man. He however said that he would, some time or other, call down and see him, and look over the establishment.

After this, the ladies became interested in some village gossip, chatted merrily with the gentlemen who arrived, estimated their missionary work, as usual, at a high figure, and laid many a plan for the future building up of their society through the instrumentality of the needle. Every body said it had been a most interesting society-day, and so one by one the party left.

"And who are all these grand folks, I wonder, flourishing about with their fur caps, and bonnets, and buffalo skins, and fine sleighs and tinkling bells? Wonder if they ever think of poor folks? Wonder if they ever was poor? Wonder if they ever had a father or mother to take care of them? They don't care for me, I know; nor do I care for them. They are proud, I know; they are rich, I s'pose. But who makes them rich? Wonder if they'd be rich if I were to burn down their houses? *Good mind to;* they don't prize their houses. They

don't deserve them, neither, as I can see. What do they care for poor Boyce or aunt Prescott? Who cared for Joe? Nobody. Mag says they are mean. Who cares for Jims? Who gives him any thing but kicks and sneers? Jims's as good as any on 'em. Here's a match! I'm almost minded to burn down this shed and store! I can set it a-fire—nobody'll see me—nobody'll care. Here's some straw; it'll blaze in half a minute. I will!"

The poor neglected Jims—for it was he—strayed off from home, and shivering under a shed, among the horses, where he had a view of the people going to and coming from this festive society, thus soliloquized and reasoned. The boy had never done any thing so bad as this which he now began to contemplate. He had committed little thefts, and been guilty of sundry smaller wicked actions; but now he took the match in his hand, impelled by the spirit of evil, and stealthily approached the corner of the shed where he had observed the loose straw. He was acting wildly, against his conscience, but in accordance with his hatred and revenge. Just as he stooped down to light the match, the low growl of a dog half covered in the straw arrested him, and caused him to start back.

"Poor dog!" said he, "I don't want to disturb *you*, I wouldn't burn your house down for the world. You and I are somewhat alike. And see how the poor dog whines now! He seems glad that I won't hurt him. Perhaps the dog knows me! Wonder if he's heard my thoughts! Dogs, they say, are knowing." And then a rooster on the beam overhead crowed, and the hens rustled as though disturbed; and another dog in the neighborhood set up a piteous, moaning bark. Jims was startled. *He cast the match into the snow, and pulling*



his cap over his face, and his loose roundabout closely to his body, rushed out into the open air, and as fast as possible made his way to the poor-house.

Arrived there, he threw himself panting on the rude bed in the kitchen, by the side of Bill, and rolling himself all up that no body might see him, after a long, long time, in which he vowed he would never do anything so wicked again if he lived a thousand years, he fell asleep.

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## CHAPTER XIII.

**FIRE.** Water is the natural element with which to oppose fire. The circumstances must be quite unfavorable, therefore, when it remains unextinguished even in the presence of this agent.

"WHAT do you think the town of Crampton's coming to, when a poor tax of two per cent. isn't enough to keep the paupers, eh?" inquired Mr. George Shire of his neighbors, Mr. Peter Newcombe and Timothy Smith.

"For my part," said Mr. Newcombe, "I say it's a plaguy shame. If two per cent. on the grand list of Crampton ain't enough to support the wretches, let them get their living elsewhere, or beg or starve—two per cent. ! Why that's enough to buy a farm. It raises eight hundred dollars, and I regard it all as about so much thrown away."

"Yes," said Mr. Smith, "all them folks down thar is a pack of scamps. They's had good times once, and now 'cause they're poor the town of Crampton must jest fork over and pay expenses. It's darned hard for poor and honest citizens to pull out their own eye teeth for sich stuff."

"Well, they say," continued Shire. "that we've got to come to it and pay more."

"Who says so?" inquired Smith.

"There's Haddock, you know"—

"Haddock! Go to thunder," said Newcombe.

"Haddock and Phillips are always grumbling," said Smith.

"The women are wide awake, they say," said Shire.

"Blast the women, I say," said Newcombe.

"They're always meddling about things they don't understand," said Smith. "But I can tell you of one woman who don't go for more charity to paupers, that's Mrs. Smith."

"Good!" said Newcombe. "But my wife has got indoctrinated some how or other, and thinks *it's a sin (!)* to show charity to any body else under the sun before we look out for our own poor."

"Pshaw! pshaw! Got that notion at the sewing society. These sewing societies, I begin to think, are bad things," said Shire. "They lead the women to 'go it blind' into benevolence, and if any body says a word to the contrary, why he's little better than an infidel, even if he belongs to the church."

"You can't get along now-a-days," said Smith, "without running every thing into religion. The minister and the church take it up. I shouldn't wonder if our minister got hold of this thing next, and went to preaching on it."

"Why, he has already got hold of it," said Shire, "my wife tells me that he and Squire Ben had the warmest talk on it, at the sewing society there, she ever heard."

"Well, *ministers had better let such things alone*," said Newcombe. "What business is it to them?"

"It ain't gospel preaching," said the other, "to find fault with the town about paupers, ha! ha! ha!"

(ALL.) "Ha! ha! ha!"

"No, by thunder," said Smith. "Guess he's a man of too much sense, to bring it into the pulpit, any how."

"If he does bring it into the pulpit, my word for't the town won't stand it," said Shire. "I kept the poor one

year myself, you know? Glad enough was I to get rid of them. They're a squalid, dirty, profane, drunken, broken-down set of old c——s, as ever trod the face of the earth. As for deserving more help and a world of pity, now I know better. And I'm the last man that'll vote another cent to keep them."

"I'm another," said Smith.

"And I, ditto," said Newcombe.

"There goes that little scamp, Jims Tucker," said Shire. "He's off now on some plundering excursion, I'll bet you a dollar. Hulloo! Jims. How goes the times at Captain Bunce's, eh?"

Jims, a poorly dressed tall boy of twelve years of age, with a slouching hat, and a hanging look about him, drew up at this address, and facing Mr. Shire, looked him straight in the eye, and answered, "First rate, sir, got a flogging this morning."

"Got a flogging, did you, what's that for, eh?"

"Oh, for grumbling and sauce."

"Then you think you deserved it, eh? Well, it's half to own up, Jims. Who flogged you?"

"Well, Captain Bunce ended it."

"'Ended it,' who began it, pray?"

"Mistress Bunce herself, said she'd teach me to hook chickens, ha! ha! ha! good."

"'Hook chickens?'"

"Yes—Why?"

"You don't steal chickens, I hope?"

"How in the world shall we get 'um then? We don't own any birds. We've got no money to buy 'um. How shall we get 'um?"

"Then let them alone."

"Yes, and the foxes would steal them then."

"And do you call yourself as mean as a fox?"

"I wish I was half as cunning, by George, wouldn't I have a chicken now and then : golly, I would."

"Well, Jims, you have enough to wear, and enough to eat, now-a-days, I believe."

"All I've got or want to wear, is what you see on me, and we have every day some of Savage's salt beef, that wants pounding on an anvil under a trip hammer, before it can be eaten. The old sow died last week, and we're smoking her shoulders and hams for us now. The Captain says we need good, hearty, substantial food."

All the men laughed heartily at this, but Jims was sober.

"Where you going now, Jims?" inquired Shire.

"Going a fishing," said the boy.

"'Fishing?'"

"Yes, up to the old pond, through the ice."

"What for?"

"For Mr. Boyce—he that's sick, you know."

"Boyce! sick! and so forth, and so forth," ejaculated Shire. "Who's Boyce, pray?"

"Don't you know Boyce, the great author?"

"Well, if I do, I've forgotten about him. How long's he been there? How old's he?"

"He's been there two or three years, I s'pose. He ain't very old—not over thirty or fifty, I reckon."

"Oh, well, I don't seem to recollect the dog. He's a state-prison fellow, ain't he?"

"No, he ain't a 'state-prison fellow,' nor a 'dog,' either, you old scamp. He knows as much as a dozen like you, and Mr. Haddock's trying to get him well."

"Just none of your sauce, boy, to me," said Shire, shaking him by the collar, "or I'll give you another *flogging* that'll make you stand round. Do you hear? *I know you of old, you little villain!*"

Jims gave a sudden spring as Shire said this ; and leaving a portion of his garment in his grasp, fled out of his reach, and catching up a stick or club that lay on the snow, hurled it at him with all the strength of his arm. Shire was obliged to dodge quickly to avoid it ; and before he could seize and throw it back, the wild boy had dodged behind a house, and was swiftly bounding away over the fields.

"A vicious, good-for-nothing young devil !" said Shire. "I know him well, and his mother before him."

"Who was she ?" inquired Newcombe.

"She was old Tucker's daughter, Annie Sue, who died in the poor-house the year the paupers were in my hands. She was a roving, hard thing, and Jims is just like her. Somebody's his father, but nobody owns him, I believe. He's a young villain, any how."

In an hour from this, Jims had reached the frozen pond, and with a hatchet, concealed under his roundabout, had cut a hole in the ice large enough to fish. He had borrowed a fish-line of a boy in the neighborhood, and determined to catch some trout for Boyce, and take them to him at Mr. Haddock's.

Long and carefully the boy watched for his wily victims ; but at length he caught two or three fine fish, weighing, one of them, more than half a pound ; and ere nightfall, he had reached in safety the house of Mr. Haddock.

It is unnecessary to say that poor Boyce rejoiced to see them. Every body admired the trout, and Jims felt a thousand times rewarded for his long, cold tramp and watching to procure them. Jims received something more than thanks, too, and was sent home only after eating a hearty supper, which he devoured with the *eagerness of a hungry wolf*.

It was past nine o'clock when the boy left Mr. Had-dock's. He hurried on towards the poor-house ; and as the snow was not deep, took a cross cut that led him close by Captain Bunce's lower barn, filled with hay and grain. Young cattle were in the yard, and a well-beaten path led right from it to the house. Just as the boy was about to turn the corner of the large stone wall and get into the path, he observed a man stealthily creeping through the bars, and then hastily hurrying along the path towards the house of Captain Bunce. The night was not so dark but that Jims could see his precise form and movements. He knew in a moment who the man was ; and to avoid him, made a new path for himself to the main road in another direction, through the untrod-den snow. As he leaped over the fence into it, he encountered Dan slowly plodding his way homeward, with a bag of cold victuals slung over his shoulder, the proceeds of a day's work of begging.

The two paupers made their way into the poor-house, and raking open the hot ashes in the fire-place, were warming and drying their feet when they were startled with the cry of "FIRE!"

This is always, especially in the country, a very exciting, as it is there a somewhat unusual alarm. It awakens from sleep every body in great terror, and all, both men and women, hurry in the greatest trembling to the scene of the conflagration. And when there, they do little besides look on and utter exclamations of surprise and sorrow at the occurrence. The alarming cry of "Fire! fire! fire!" began in the neighborhood of it, soon had its echo and reëcho on every side. And away it rolled to the village, and soon the bells of the town took it up, and all Crampton was astir and pell-mell for the *locality of the startling scene*. Riders in sleighs and on

horseback hurried away at fullest speed, crying, as they rode and ran, "fire! fire! fire!" Men and women and boys hurried along on foot, venturing opinions as to where and what the fire was, and how and when it broke out, who caused it, and what the motive was. And in a very short space of time there were four or five hundred people gathered around the burning pile, who could do little else than look on as the flames fiercely consumed the building, reducing it in an incredibly short time with all its contents to ashes.

The building thus destroyed was Captain Bunce's lower barn, filled with hay and grain, and having some young cattle in the yard, which were driven out through the bars by the first who arrived on the premises. So the loss was confined to the hay and grain, and the building. There was an insurance on the whole, but Captain Bunce thought only about half enough to save him.

Before many of the people had arrived on the ground, some curious persons, always on the alert to spy out and detect the parties in transactions involving criminal conduct, had observed in the snow the fresh tracks made that very evening by Jims, in his return home from Mr. Haddock's.

Rumors were of course rife that the fire was the work of an incendiary. Captain Bunce knew of no body visiting the barn that evening with a lantern or any light whatsoever, and it was generally conceded that the barn had been fired by some one with evil intentions.

It was very easy, of course, to identify the foot-tracks of Jims, and he was suspected and believed to have caused the fire.

The agents of the insurance company came the next day on to the ground, and settled with Captain Bunce the *amount of damages* he should receive, if every thing



appeared satisfactory in regard to the manner of the fire. The policy of insurance was for nine hundred dollars, three hundred on the barn, three hundred on the hay, and three hundred on the grain. As the Captain couldn't positively swear to the amount of hay and grain, he was content to call the whole loss seven hundred dollars. This showed that he *was* fully insured.

Poor Jims! What a dismal condition he was now in! How many circumstances all lay flatly against him! The motive? Revenge for the flogging he had received, and for other instances of ill treatment. The proof? His absence in the evening; his return just before the fire occurred; his track in the snow to the barn-yard wall, and thence to the street; his own confession that he returned at that hour across the field; the testimony of Mr. Haddock, unwillingly given, that he left his house at the time specified.

Jims had now enough to sadden him, and almost drive him to despair. He was shut up by himself, and compelled to reflect long and bitterly on his unhappy condition. But there were two sources of comfort that he enjoyed, and they contributed very much to carry him calmly through his trial. The first was the full consciousness of his innocence. He knew, absolutely, that of the crime with which he was charged he was not guilty. The second was the reflection that, only a short time previously, he had made a firm resolve, having escaped a temptation, that he would never do an act of this nature if he were to live a thousand years. So it had never entered his thoughts to fire the barn.

At the very first of the suspicions against Jims, Mr. Haddock had sought him out, and in a private interview had drawn from him a full recital of the whole day's *history*, including the circumstance of seeing a man

stealing out of the barn-yard as he was ready to pass it. He also obtained the name of the person, but enjoined it on Jims by no means to mention it, or the fact of seeing him, till he should direct. Mr. Haddock was fully persuaded of the boy's innocence. How to make it appear, was a work of some study.

## CHAPTER XIV.

THE Little Incendiary. Be very careful how you stand up for an Incendiary. The Partaker is as bad as the Thief, you know.

OF course, the next two or three days there was a good deal of talk about the burning of Captain Bunce's barn. That it was the work of an incendiary, no one seemed to entertain the least doubt ; while the general opinion was equally decisive, that the cause of all the trouble was the vicious young pauper, Jims Tucker.

Before the insurance company was willing to pay over even the seven hundred dollars agreed on as the amount of damage to the Captain, they insisted on an examination before a justice of the peace. Accordingly, although Captain Bunce was willing to waive this, and rather thought by taking up with seven hundred it would not be pressed—the Captain shrinking from public notoriety ! also being a merciful and humane man ! But an examination was ordered, and it was held, with all due legal forms, before Squire Ben Stout.

The object of the insurance company by the examination, was simply to ascertain whether Captain Bunce was directly or indirectly concerned in firing the barn—not to ascertain the guilty party, if other than he, and procure a conviction. And they, in prosecuting their inquiries, were especially anxious to save themselves the payment of the loss.

*Accordingly, Captain Bunce was called to the stand, and put through a very rigid examination.*

"You were insured, Captain Bunce, in the —— company, on your barn, for nine hundred dollars?" said Lawyer Ketchum.

"On the barn and contents—yes."

"True—yes. Well, sir, would this cover the whole value, at any one time, since the policy was made out?"

Lawyer Tools objected. This was "a leading question involving Captain Bunce's private pecuniary concerns : it could not properly come up."

Lawyer Ketchum wished "to know what this investigation was ordered for, if not to look into a question of a pecuniary nature. Was not the whole subject a pure case of dollars and cents?"

The Justice thought "the question must be answered." So Captain Bunce replied, that "it might cover it and it might not."

"Precisely, then, you think it *might* cover it?"

"Yes, sir, and it might not."

"What do you mean by that, Captain Bunce?"

"Why, that if I had fifteen hundred dollars' worth in the barn, it wouldn't cover it."

"That seems highly probable. But did you ever have fifteen hundred dollars' worth of hay and grain in the barn at one time?"

"Well—I should say—that—it was rather—*rather* doubtful."

"Doubtful, eh?"

"He means to say ——" said Lawyer Tools.

"No matter what he means to say ; *we* understand him," said the other lawyer.

"Oh, well, Ketchum, give a man a fair chance," grumbled Tools.

"Then what do you mean, Captain Bunce, when you *say it might not cover the loss*?"

"Well, that possibly there might be more stuff in the barn than the policy would cover."

"That is, more than nine hundred dollars," said Ket-chum.

"Now, Captain Bunce, be so good as to tell us how much hay there was in the barn—how much rye, how much corn, how much oats and straw, and so forth."

Captain Bunce couldn't recollect precisely, but according to his best belief and knowledge, there were twenty tons of hay, one hundred bushels of rye, two hundred and fifty bushels of corn, and one hundred and seventy-five bushels of oats. The Captain stuck at this all the way through, having that very morning cast up this amount, as making out the sum of nine hundred dollars, calling the barn worth three hundred.

Had he sold any? None of any account. Had he fed out any hay? Very little. Why did he offer to take seven hundred? To do the right thing with the company.

"Captain Bunce!" (A long pause.)

"Yes, sir," said the Captain, looking ready to answer.

"Well—did you on the night of the fire have any occasion to go to the barn with a cigar, lantern, match, or other lighted material, or means of fire?"

"Not to my best recollection."

"You did not even go to the barn that day or evening, eh?"

"I presume I went to it in the course of the day."

"Yes, but not in the evening? Not after dark, you are sure?"

Lawyer Tools interposed to say that this was crowding his client and friend, Captain Bunce, and he should object to the question.

*Justice Stout* considered the matter, and rather thought

Captain Bunce must, on the whole, answer that question. Lawyer Tools thought that it might be best to call a man guilty and prove him so afterwards.

Captain Bunce said he did go there after dark.

"Yes ; you say you did go there after dark. Now, Captain Bunce, did you or did you not take any fire with you to that barn ?"

"Not any at all, sir ; I went down to see if all was safe, and did not go into the barn. I often—generally do so."

"Did any of your family go down in the evening ?"

"Not to my knowledge."

"Did any of the paupers—I believe you have the town poor on your hands, Captain Bunce—did any of the poor folks go down ?"

"We shall show *that*," said Lawyer Tools.

"Never mind, sir, perhaps *we* can," retorted Ketchum.

"Gentlemen may as well pursue a straightforward course," interposed Justice Ben Stout.

"Well, Captain Bunce, have you any idea how that fire occurred ?"

"Of course he has an '*idea*,'" said Tools. "What evidence is that ?"

"Yes, I have an '*idea*,'" said Captain Bunce.

"Never mind the idea—never mind that now," said Ketchum.

"Have you any well grounded *proof* that the barn was set on fire ?"

Captain Bunce said he had, the best in the world. He believed, he almost knew it was set on fire by Jims, the town pauper, because he (the Captain) had flogged him. The boy's tracks were seen in the snow. He had been absent all day and all the evening until just about *the time of the fire*. He had been afraid of the boy for *some time*.

"Did you see the boy that day after you flogged him?"

"No, sir. He ran away."

"Do you know where he went to?"

"He went up town some where."

"Where?"

"Went, I believe, a-fishing."

"And was gone all day?"

"Yes."

"Then you didn't see him that day at all?"

"Not till the fire, of course."

"Of course—of course! You didn't see him go to the barn or come from it that day or evening, till the alarm of fire?"

"That's all, that's all; sit down, Captain, sit down; sit down, sir."

"Stop a moment, Captain," said Lawyer Tools. "How do you account for Jims' having burned the barn?"

"Why, just out of spite. You see the boy often gets a flogging—he's a hard boy to get along with any how—and we flogged him that morning for stealing chickens."

"And he set the barn on fire from revenge?"

"Yes, sir; undoubtedly."

"Undoubtedly!" said Lawyer Tools.

"You say he *did* set the barn on fire?" said Lawyer Ketchum.

"Well—er—that is—'*undoubtedly*' he did—yes, sir."

"With that qualification, Ketchum, that's all," said Tools. "Ain't you satisfied?"

"I am not exactly," replied the other.

"You say you didn't see the boy all day till the fire in the evening, yet swear that he undoubtedly burned the barn. Now what proof have you of this? It must be very strong, Captain Bunce."

*Here Mr. Tools was highly incensed. He said it was*

a mere professional dodge and snare. It was going all round Robin Hood's barn to prove that Captain Bunce's barn wasn't burned by a boy that every body *knew* burned it; and burned it at no connivance of Captain Bunce, but purely and of his own instincts from a desire of revenge. Mr. Tools never saw a question so plain as this made so complete a fog of. For his part, he hoped that the investigation would be kept in due bounds of law and evidence. His time was too precious to throw away, and his ideas of professional practice too sensitive to relish fun and stratagem, where character and property were at stake, as in the instance before them.

The business of the "investigation" then again went on. Mr. Ketchum said he was a straightforward man, and only wanted to get at the truth.

"Proceed, gentlemen," said Justice Stout. "What proof have you, Captain Bunce, that the boy burned the barn, and that he alone burned it?"

"The marks in the snow, the fact of his returning at the time, his ill will towards me, and so forth."

"You saw those foot-prints yourself?"

"I did."

"You knew when he returned?"

"I saw him at the fire."

Captain Bunce was permitted to sit down.

Mr. Smith swore to his encounter with the boy in the morning. Dick Bunce and Elisha and Mrs. Bunce swore to his being flogged, and leaving in a pet. Dick was sure the boy burned the barn—was ready to swear to it; none too good to do it, nor any thing else. Dick talked loud, and a great deal. He said the boy was gone all day and all the evening.

"Were you at home in the evening?" inquired *Lawyer Ketchum*.



"I—yes—no, I was not all the evening."

"How, then, do you *know* the boy was absent?"

"By what others tell me—every body says so."

"Yes, but this is not your own knowledge. Did you return home that evening?"

"Yes, sir, I returned home, of course."

"Before the fire, or at the alarm of fire?"

"Oh, I don't just recollect now—yes, after the fire."

"You did not return in season to go down to the barn to feed the stock, or any thing of that sort?"

"Oh, no, of course."

"Call in colored Bill," said Lawyer Ketchum.

"Bill, were any of the poor folks gone from home that day of the fire, except Jims?"

"Yes, Dan was gone, Mag was gone, John Tucker and Pol was gone."

"Did they come back that night?"

"Dan come back with Jims, and the rest come back some time, don't know when."

"Did you see Captain Bunce that evening, Bill?"

Mr. Tools objected.

Mr. Ketchum persisted.

Mr. Stout wasn't certain—finally allowed.

"Wall, I saw him about eight o'clock, I guess."

"You must not *guess* here," said Mr. Tools.

"Wall, then, I *know*."

"How so?" inquired Ketchum.

"He come into the poor-house, and asked where all the folks was?"

"What did you tell him?"

"I told him Roxy was gone off with Dick. Ha! ha! ha!" The negro's laugh was communicated to others.

"*Ha! ha!*" began the crowd.

"*Order!*" shouted the justice, "there must be order!"

"What did he say to that?"

"He said Dick was hazeing after that girl too much."

Justice Stout promptly put down all manifestations of excitement in the crowd, and Mr. Ketchum inquired if Captain Bunce appeared anxious to see Dick.

Lawyer Tools objected—objection sustained.

"Well, Bill, can you tell me whether Dick came home that evening?"

"He did, sir, he came home before the fire."

"You mean *at* the fire," quickly suggested Lawyer Tools.

"No, *sir-ee*, I mean half an hour before the fire," said the negro stoutly.

"Why, there must be some error here," said Tools.

"Keep quiet, Mr. Tools," said Ketchum, "we shall get at the thing by degrees; don't fly into a heat now, don't."

Mr. Tools looked flushed, but sat down.

"He came home half an hour before the fire. How do you know?"

"Because he said it was half-past eight, and Jims and Dan and Mag and Pol and Tucker were out, when they'd ought to be home, bed, and sleep—wondered if any of 'em had gone down to the barn to sleep."

Mr. Tools, with some excitement, requested the justice to observe that this testimony was flatly in contradiction with that of Mr. Richard Bunce, who testified that he did not return till after the fire, etc., etc.

Justice Stout took a note of it.

Mr. Ketchum said it was his liberty to show, by a disinterested witness, wherein the witnesses on the part of Captain Bunce had testified erroneously. Mr. Tools shook his head, Mr. Stout considered the matter by looking first at one party and then at the other over his *spectacles*.

"Go on, Bill," said Justice Stout.

"Haven't anything more to say, sir—except this, Dick told me he believed Jims or some of them would get into State's prison yet. What for? I said. For burning barns or something else."

"A c——d lie!" roared a voice from the crowd. It was Richard Bunce.

"Undoubtedly!" said lawyer Tools.

"What is the point, gentlemen?" inquired the justice.

"It is this, may it please the Court," said Mr. Ketchum, "that this witness swears to a conversation with Richard about the 'burning of barns,' evidently thinking of his father's barns, half an hour before the event, or before any body else had apparently thought of such an event!"

"The witness ought not to be interrupted," said the justice, "though he should remember to speak only the truth and what he knows."

Bill said he didn't pretend to know anything. He only said just what he saw "with his natural eyes and heard with his natural ears." So he was dismissed.

Now it came for Jims to be examined. The boy looked very much abashed and shy when brought forward—you would say at once guilty—and how could he be otherwise than guilty? Did not all the evidence lean against him? Was he not friendless too, and suspected of every crime committed in the neighborhood?

But Jims' appearance was rather the natural awkwardness of one brought up in an inferior condition, who had all his life been abused and kept in the dust; it was more this than the effect of guilt. He was oppressed by the scowling look of the people, and by the *consciousness* of their verdict already made up against

him, as well as by the circumstances all harmonizing to convict him, but not by any sense of his criminality in the case—so he showed as good a face as he, poor boy, felt able to, and several times made such replies to the lawyer's interrogatories as to rather interest the spectators in his favor.

He admitted the flogging and the cause of it. His evil temper ; his brush with Mr. Shire, but told them Mr. Shire inflamed him by calling Mr. Boyce names, and then by shaking him and threatening to flog him again. The people all looked at Shire rather searchingly and inquiringly.

"Well, it was something so, by thunder, boy," said Shire, in the crowd.

"It was, eh?" said Lawyer Tools, jocosely.

Jims told his story till he got to the corner of the barn-yard wall. Here the lawyers and the justice, and all the people were very intent to get hold of every word he spoke, and of every idea and shade of thought the poor boy had.

"You say," said Tools, "you went acrost the lot in the snow because it was nearer?"

"Yes, sir."

"How much nearer was it?"

"I don't know, some considerable."

"You went to the corner of the wall?"

"Yes, I went there."

"Did you go round the corner into the path?"

"No, I didn't."

"Did you get over the wall, my boy ; you needn't be afraid to say so if you did. Did you get over the wall into the yard?" blandly inquired Tools.

"No, I didn't."

"*You didn't even climb the wall to see the cattle?*"

"No, not a bit."

"Well, my boy, you say you stopped at the corner of the wall a little time—say how long."

"A minute."

"Was it not fifteen minutes?"

"Fifteen minutes! Oh, dear, no! I was home talking with old Dan in less than that."

"Perhaps you went acrost the fields to meet Dan?"

"No, I didn't; met him by accident. It was dark."

"Well, now, you neither went round the corner of the wall, nor got up on to it, nor over it, nor round the barn—how then did you get into the yard——"

"I didn't get there, I tell you, at all!" said the lad, with the quickness of lightning.

"You see," said Ketchum, "this game won't do, Tools; he's a straight out-and-outer. You can't fog him, nor cross him, nor trip him."

"Well," said Tools, "he must tell the truth."

"By all means!" said the justice.

"Any thing further to ask?" inquired Ketchum.

"Yes—stay a moment. Haddock! call Mr. Haddock."

Mr. Haddock came forward.

"I think you said, Mr. Haddock, that this boy left your house a little past nine?"

"Yes, sir."

"Did he appear in a hurry to go?"

"Nothing unusually so."

"Did he seem morose, look dog-eared, and bent on mischief?"

"He seemed perfectly mild and harmless."

Mr. Ketchum inquired if he thought "it very likely he would go away and set a barn on fire in five minutes from that time."

*Mr. Haddock regarded it morally impossible.*

Lawyer Tools didn't "care a pin" what Haddock thought, or Ketchum, or any body else. He only wanted facts, and he'd "have them if they were not covered up and befogged by 'moral impossibilities,' till it was *legally* impossible to tell black from white!" Tools had a way of getting off things that pleased the crowd, who always pricked up their ears, opened their eyes, and gaped with their mouths till he finished off, and then took a long breath as a relief.

"Well, boy," said Tools, "*you say you didn't go round the corner of that wall into the path.* Now I want to know one thing. Why did you stop there 'a minute,' as you say, and then run off in another direction in the snow, when there was a good path right home from the bars! Now answer that!"

"I had rather not answer it."

"But you must," said Lawyer Tools.

"By all means," said the justice.

"May be you'd let me bear the blame if I didn't?" said the boy, with tears.

"It don't look very much like guilt," said one and another, whispering through the crowded hall.

"May it please the court," said Lawyer Ketchum, "if the boy ran through the snow, in preference to taking a beaten path where his tracks would not be seen, it appears to me he had some good reason for so doing other than the consciousness of guilt."

"Oh, ho!" said Tools; "impressions and opinions are of no consequence. The boy had a reason for not taking the path. Now I want him to disclose it."

"I had rather not," said the boy, with his head down.

Mr. Haddock whispered Mr. Ketchum, and Mr. Ketchum whispered Tools, and they both conferred with the justice to the following purport: That the justice should

kindly assure the boy of his favor, and lead him to disclose what he knew. So Justice Stout put on his best appearance, and calling the boy a little nearer him, told him that he need be under no apprehension that any body would hurt him if he told what he knew, and assured him that every body in the room was his friend !

Jims said he wasn't afraid "of being hurt."

"What are you afraid of?" inquired the justice.

"Who said I was afraid of any thing?" he asked.

"True, but we all thought so," said Mr. Ben Stout.

"I don't want to hurt *him*—I ain't afraid of being hurt."

"Who do you mean by '*him*,' my boy?"

"I mean *Dick Bunce*."

"Whew!" exclaimed Tools, and it was noticed that Dick Bunce looked blank and trembled.

"Well, what of *him*—how can he be hurt?"

"*I saw him*!"—— said the boy.

"It's a lie, d—— you!" shouted a voice in the crowd, and Dick Bunce, pale and trembling, stood forth before the assembly. Captain Bunce cast an uneasy glance around him. The people scarcely breathed.

"Well, my boy, tell us now all you know."

"SPEAK THE TRUTH!" said a low, solemn voice near him, and Jims immediately stood up straight and firm, and said in a clear voice: "I was going round the corner into the path, when I saw a man come out through the bars stealthily, and take the path before me directly towards the house. I turned into the snow, because I didn't want to have him see me."

"Did you know him?"

"Yes, I knew him at once."

"Who was that man?"

"*The truth now, boy*," said Tools.

"Dick Bunce!"

"'Spotted' him, by George!" said Nelson Smith to Ralph Newton, as he noticed how Dick colored, trembled, perspired, and finally sat down.

"Call Doctor Murdock," said Lawyer Ketchum.

"What do you want of Doctor Murdock, Ketchum—you ain't sick, I hope?"

"We want to know whether the doctor has any practice in his profession dark evenings, away from home," said the other limb of the law.

"Doctor Murdock, were you out on professional business the evening of this fire?"

"I believe I was, sir."

"Did you have occasion to ride by Captain Bunce's that evening?"

"Yes, sir, on my return home."

"What time in the evening was that, doctor?"

"Not many minutes after nine o'clock."

"And can you state any thing in relation to this fire?"

"That is," interposed Lawyer Tools, "did you or did you not notice that the barn was on fire?"

"No, I did not observe any fire."

"Good—you should say the barn was *not* on fire!"

"I saw no fire—no light."

"Every thing remained quiet?" continued Tools.

"Yes, so far as I noticed about the barn. But there were people in the road—"

"No matter about 'people in the road,' there are always people going and coming in our streets and highways—no fire, you say?"

"None that I observed."

"All right, doctor; any thing further, Ketchum?"

*Mr. Ketchum said* "Yes—did you see the boy Jim



on the road, or about the premises, as you rode by that evening ?”

“Not to my recollection.”

“Did you see the girl Roxy, or Mag Davis, or any of the poor-house folks, wandering about ?”

“I remember passing ‘old Dan,’ as they call him, about fifty or a hundred rods below, with a bag or something of the kind on his shoulder.”

“Dan, eh ?” said Tools.

“Dan !” said Justice Stout. “Did Dan burn the barn ? Oh, excuse me !—er—all right—go on, gentlemen.” The justice seemed to be a little lost for some reason.

“You are sure it was Dan ?” inquired Lawyer Ketchum.

“Yes, for I spoke to him, and offered him a seat.”

“Oh, well, of course the doctor knew him—why puzzle the doctor on a self-evident point ?” said Tools. “And that was all, I suppose ?” he continued—“nothing seemed out of place—nothing new—nothing terrible going on, was there, doctor ?”

“That was all, except this, if I remember right : Just as I got against Captain Bunce’s—my mare walking along—a man suddenly ran acrost the road, from the barnside to the other, just ahead of me, and frightened the mare so that she darted out one side and nearly upset me. I, however, reined her in ; and just then I heard the man, in a rather hoarse and rough voice that I recognized, exclaim, ‘THE D—L !’”

“Who, in your opinion, uttered those words ?” inquired Ketchum.

“I took it to be Dick ; I know Dick pretty well, and thought it was he.”

“You *thought* it was Dick Bunce ?” said Tools.

“I *KNEW* it was Dick Bunce,” said the sound and unflinching doctor.

It is always curious to mark the changes of opinion that take place in a court-room when one is on trial, or a question is pending before a jury. Opinions there are often entirely reversed—and that not only once, but two or three, or even half a dozen times—swaying now this way and anon that way, so that at last it often happens that persons who went to a trial perfectly convinced that Mr. A. was guilty, have gone away with the full belief that the guilty party was Mr. B. So they have been known to say, "We don't know which is guilty, or whether either of them is so, if there has been even any guilt or criminality at all."

In this case, every body at first seemed perfectly satisfied that Jims Tucker was an infernal little scoundrel, who had, out of revenge, burnt up a thousand dollars' worth of property belonging to Captain Bunce. But after Doctor Murdock got through, his testimony corroborating the straightforward, simple story of Jims, every body in the court-room—especially as Dick was so much agitated that he leaped up and rushed, pale and trembling, out of the hall—believed Dick Bunce alone the guilty party, and Jims as innocent as Squire Ben himself.

In all human probability, Dick saved himself from the State prison by running away and escaping to sea, where he soon after died. Mrs. Bunce was terribly mortified by the result of this investigation, as Dick was her very favorite son, and she soon after was attacked with a fever that carried her off. Poor woman! she did not live to "cook the beef."

As no evidence appeared to show that Captain Bunce knew any thing of Dick's act or intention in burning the barn, he got his seven hundred dollars of the insurance company, and took to drinking harder than ever.

In the meantime, Durkee, the butcher, and Betsey Bunce made a hurried match and went out West. Captain Bunce was left in rather poor circumstances to carry on his poor-house establishment, especially as Henrietta and Elisha were infirm, and of very little help to him. But with two good stout servant girls, and a hired man, he contrived to keep along."

Contrary to the general expectation, the Captain manifested towards Jims a much more kind demeanor than ever before, so that the boy was far less uncomfortable in his quarters than he would otherwise have been.

## CHAPTER XV

ALANSON.

THE cold of winter continued. It was painful to witness its effect on the decrepid and poorly clad inmates of the poor-house. Without money to relieve their necessities, without friends to whom they could fly for aid, without strength to engage in any remunerative employment, without food nourishing in quality and kindly dealt to them, without warm and cleanly clothing, without comfortable rooms and beds ; without congenial or desirable society, and daily companionships—without the kind sympathy of the world, and yet quite near the end of it, they drooped rapidly, sensibly, certainly, and especially during the reign of cold. The paupers always lost from three to five of their number every winter, their broken and undermined constitutions being unable to resist its severity.

So it happened with Alanson Boyce, the author, that in two weeks' time, notwithstanding the care of Mr. and Mrs. Haddock, he began to fail.

Captain Bunce came once to see him, and proposed that he should return if able in two or three days, as he didn't like to have a bad example set before the other paupers. It made them uneasy if one fared any different from the rest.

"I think," said the Captain, "you are now in a very fair way ; you'll be all right, O. K. in a few days, and *able to help us*. I guess by day after to-morrow—eh—

don't you think by day after morrow you can get home again, eh, Boyce ?”

“ Don't, pray don't fix the time now, if you please, Captain Bunce—I will consult with Mr. Haddock.”

“ Oh, that's of no use ; you see your doing as well now as can be expected, and the folks at the house want dreadfully to see you.”

“ Yes, but I am very weak yet.”

“ You need to get out into the open air : now a little good exercise will give you strength and an appetite. I think you had better fix the time as I mentioned.”

“ If I must I will ; but won't you see Mr. Haddock first ?”

“ Well, if it comes right—but never mind that ; you know I can't afford to board you here ; and Haddock will be sure, I think, to charge us a sweet bill for your trouble in the end.”

Boyce groaned and turned away his head. He knew better ; he knew Mr. Haddock had no such intentions, but as he was conscious of receiving from him his present kindness as a gratuity, it would be indelicate to argue this, and he said nothing. But he thought he could not return to the poor-house. How he loathed it ! His sensitiveness was deeply wounded at the idea. He shrunk from any and all dependence, especially from that public relief which the town in its boasted philanthropy provided, but which made poverty more fearfully appalling and humiliating, so proving true that—

“ Nothing in poverty so ill is borne,  
As its exposing men to grinning scorn.”—OLDHAM.

Boyce felt in his soul a desire that he might rather die than go back to the poor-house. The Captain seeing him rather the worse for his visit, told him to “ chirk *up and be a man.*” “ I will come over,” said he, “ with

the red cutter and bear's skin and bells. Won't we have a fine, nice ride of it, hey? So chirk up, man—good-bye. And the Captain bowed off.

Mr. Haddock happened to be absent when the Captain made this call, and was pained on his return to witness the discouraged and anguished look of his poor patient. But he assured him he should be taken care of and kept from the poor-house, as long as he had a home to shelter him. The terrible shadow of the poor-house had, however, again passed over the soul of the enfeebled sufferer, and it quickened his decline to the grave.

And now something seemed to weigh heavily on his mind and to cause him frequently to sigh and groan to the infinite distress of his good and kind friends. What it was, they could not understand. It led them to be more attentive to every one of his wants, and by many acts of kindness to merit his confidence.

At length Boyce informed them, that he left in England, five years before, a beautiful and affectionate wife and a child one year old, who had never been permitted to join him since, although till within the last two years he had received regular communications and letters from her. He now felt it almost certain that he was destined never again to see on the earth that beloved one, nor his sweet little Alice; and the thought was harrowing to his soul. A merciful God had given him friends, and restored to him his intellect from its late wretched and weakened state, but, alas! with what quickened sensibilities he now contemplated the whole truth of that condition which forbade him the hope of ever again clasping in his arms the tender one from whom this long, long separation was but the prelude to *one as boundless as time*. Should he never see again

his adored, his chaste, his lovely Laura? "Were the waves of the sea to divide them on earth, and the wheels of time to roll their separating cycles on their pathway—forever, till in the future world—dissolving the golden chain that had bound together their youthful hearts? Was true love born in time, but only thus to perish, and the friends who are to each most dear and affectionate, to suffer the rudest separations; and while their hearts are beating, their hands opened, their eyes o'erflowing, shall they be made to feel that the joy of meeting is to them forbidden?"

It was thus that Boyce, his understanding now fully restored to him, continued to dwell on the history of his life we have now sketched. It was touching to hear him, painful to see him sinking, a mild, sweet, gentle sufferer—one of the bright young geniuses of earth, his lamp burning pure and faithful at the last lightings of it, but in its flashings giving presage of its near extinction.

Both Mr. and Mrs. Haddock deemed it advisable that he should see and converse with their pastor. They proposed the interview, and Boyce gladly consented. It took place the next day, and contributed much to the relief of the sufferer's mind, especially on the subject of meeting one's friends in the future world, and mutually recognizing each other, a point on which Boyce was much excited. It was Mr. Rodman's firm conviction they would do so, and he advanced many suggestions in favor of his opinion, that tended to the conviction and comfort of the invalid. "We shall know the Saviour in his glory," said he, "and we shall, each one of us, be known and loved by him and by the Father. How reasonable to suppose, then, we shall also know each other, and communicate to one another our joy." He was able

also to help him more clearly comprehend the fulness of that redemption by the Son of God which is the Spirit of Prophecy, and the hope of all true Christian believers. Boyce became more and more calm and hopeful, and child-like in his confidence, as he approached nearer the outline of his life's boundary, and saw the shadows fall beyond it.

On an evening somewhat dark and stormy, after a rather mild winter's day, Jims, in his slouching hat, and coarse and tattered garments, went sauntering off towards the town. He carefully avoided stopping anywhere, and kept along in the middle of the road, where, without any intention on his part, he was soon to meet a person who like himself was carefully avoiding all intersecting roads and places of rest, although needing shelter and fondly hoping to find it. A poor, feeble, delicate woman is taken up at mid-day by a traveler in a large sleigh, on the public road, and carried by him fifteen miles, to the borders of Crampton, where she alights with a young child and a small bundle, thanking earnestly and with lady-like words the kind old gentleman for his humanity.

"And what will you do now, my young friend?" he inquired, as the lady stepped upon the snow path with her child.

"I will walk, as before," she answered, "and hope to reach the town before dark."

"You must walk fast—too fast, I fear, for your strength to do it," said he, "and I wish I could take you further."

"Never mind it, sir; you have done me great kindness in bringing me and my little one so far; may God reward you, as he will, I doubt not," so saying, she took the child's hand and walked on.

*The old gentleman's heart smote him as she walked*



painfully away, and the little child seemed ready to fall at every step. Still the mother held on, and by-and-bye, as she followed a curve of the road, she was hidden from the traveler, and he slowly walked his horse along his own way. Three weary miles the woman walked that evening—her little child often crying with fatigue and cold and hunger, and no one happening to pass along who could take them up. At length a man with an ox-team and sled overtook them, and carried them through the village of Crampton a quarter of a mile, to his own gateway. The lady wished to go further if possible, about half a mile further, on the way to Captain Bunce's.

The man was struck with the delicate, kindly, and attractive appearance of the lady, and tried to interest her in conversation. But she said few words, except monosyllables, inquiring occasionally how she might find the poor-house, and if the people there were well taken care of, and were in good health. The man studied her face and bearing earnestly, to assure himself of her character and object, and from all that he could discern concluded that she could be none other than the celebrated Miss Dix, bent on one of those benevolent excursions to their own poor-house, he had often read of her making elsewhere. He remained of this impression up to the time of her leaving him. It was nearly—nay, it was dark, when the man stopped his team at his own door, and civilly and urgently invited her to go in and stay with them all night—at least allow his wife to give her a cup of tea.

"How far is it on this road," said she, earnestly, "to the poor-house?"

"Well, ma'am," he replied, "it is half a mile."

"And is it *so* near!" she exclaimed. "No, sir, I will *not stop a moment*. We will soon reach it. Thank *you, my good friend—farewell!*"

So saying, she clasped the little child by the arm and fairly hurried her along.

Toiling on, for it was dark now—the road was slippery, the storm beginning, the winds moaning, the clouds growing thicker,—the woman and child nearly sinking to the snow, almost despairing—yet so near the goal of their labors, they encountered a solitary being walking dreamily along the same road, a boy with his hat pulled over his face, and his shoes and garments indicating poverty and misery.

The two parties naturally observed each other as they met, and the lady inquired of Jims how much further it was to the poor-house.

"The poor-house!" said the boy, wildly.

"Yes, if you please, my lad," said she, quietly.

"The Lord bless us! You arn't going there?"

"But why not go there?"

"Oh, it's the most wretchedest place on earth!" said the boy.

"But people live in it," said the woman.

"Yes, we live in it—we, a sort of people; but no ladies or smart folks live there. It's a forsaken spot."

"Then *you* live there!" exclaimed she, with thrilling anxiety and earnestness.

"I do," said Jims. "It's my own, my only home."

"Guide me there, boy—now, *now*, this minute—and I will reward you—if I can."

"Oh! if you want to get there, come then. I know every foot of the way there, in the dark as well as in the day."

So Jims led her along, the woman trembling and holding the little one by her side, occasionally carrying her a few rods; and by-and-bye they reached the gate of that *dwelling*, towards which the heart of this poor

traveler had been pointing for the last ten days with consuming fervor.

"Here we are, ma'am," said Jims, throwing open the door. "Walk in. Every body is at home here."

A large dingy room, dimly lighted, with a small, feeble fire on the hearth, and ten or twelve persons around it, (feeble, singular-looking, old, and broken down,) now received the stranger and her child. Involuntarily, both drew back by the door, and experienced a shuddering, revolting sensation at the sight before them.

"Here's a new comer, I guess, Mrs. Prescott," cried Jims. "She's tired, though, and so is the little girl with her."

"Come here, poor soul," said the widow, rising and hobbling towards her.

And aunt Dorothy, who was smoking her pipe, exclaimed :

"Drum, drum, drum, dro, de dro, dri do—  
On Jordan's stormy banks I stand ;  
Drum, de drum, dri, dro,  
And cast a wishful look behind."

"Never mind *her*," said Mag to the stranger, as she wildly stared at her in real alarm.

"Come, sit down, good lady," said the widow, "and warm your feet."

"Perhaps you can tell me," said the lady, trembling all over as she spoke, "whether there's one *Mr. Alanson Boyce* in these quarters?"

"*Boyce ! He's gone*," said Jims, "to——"

But before he could finish the speech, the lady dropped from her chair to the floor, fainting with agitation, fatigue, and disappointment.

They raised her and placed her on the bed, and *bathed her temple* in cold water, while Bill hurried

over to the Captain's and procured his assistance. Henrietta came over with camphor ; and the lady was just beginning to revive, when in came Jims, bounding from the door, followed by Mr. and Mrs. Haddock. The boy's instincts had told him what to do in this emergency, and he had darted away over the fields, with the swiftness of a deer, to communicate the intelligence to them. Almost as rapidly, the whole party had returned.

" *Where has he gone ? Tell me, and I will go to him. Tell me,*" said the stranger, recovering. " *Am I not his wife ? Is not this child his own little Alice ? Tell me where I shall find him, my husband !*"

" *Dear creature !*" said Mrs. Haddock, pressing her to her lips, and soothing her with the gentlest tones of her voice. " *Believe me, he is not far off. He is under our own roof, but a short, very short distance off, and will be most happy and overjoyed to see you.*"

The lady leaned her head on the breast of Mrs. Haddock, and burst into a flood of tears. She filled the room with her sobs and exclamations of gratitude ; and Alice also cried, as a child will often cry, with fear, and wonder, and fatigue, intermingled.

As for Captain Bunce, he expressed the utmost joy that Mr. and Mrs. Haddock had come over, for he shouldn't have known "what in the world to do with the poor critur any how."

By degrees, as he could bear it, Boyce was made acquainted with her arrival. The flame of the poor sufferer's life almost flashed out in its brilliant burnings, as he at length came to understand the good news. He wildly called her name, and soon after pressed her to his heart. It was an hour of deepest emotion to both—the hour of their first meeting. How she called him her lost "*Alanson !*" and rolled her long, delicate fingers

through the dark locks of his hair. How she wept on his cheek and kissed away his and her own tears, and pressed his hands which fondly clung to her's. Their eyes failed them as they looked on one another, and their voices were voices of joy and sorrow intermingled as they spoke to one another. It was now of old England! and anon of America! It was of prosperity and adversity. It was of hope and fear, of the past and present. And Boyce, with a father's pride and joy, pressed to his heart his dear little Alice, now six years of age, sweet image of her mother, a young, sunny-haired child of the old world, but early transplanted, through a storm-cloud on the sea and death-waves to many hapless ones, to the new.

It was a long story that occupied them day after day to tell each other of the past. We must in the recital cut it short. Suffice it that she had followed both her parents to the grave, and had failed during the last two or three years of receiving any letters or intelligence from her husband. At length, with Alice, she left England for America, determined to find her husband, or learn what had become of him. The ship was wrecked on the Jersey shore in a gale and she was the only lady passenger rescued. She and Alice were saved, but nearly every thing of value was lost. They were humanely treated, however, being taken to New York, and efforts made at her request to ascertain some tidings of her husband. For a long time their efforts were unavailing, but finally she heard through a publishing house in the city, that he had been unfortunate in his recent manuscripts, finding no publisher ready to undertake them, (but that chiefly owing to his own weak state of health, affecting his intellectual accuracy,) and that *he had been driven by "hard times" out of the city,*

they knew not where ! This was a killing blow to her. For many days she was so much discouraged by it, that her health sensibly declined, and she anticipated a long, distressing sickness. One day, however, the darkness was all dissipated in a moment. The publisher already referred to sent her a letter, received from the Rev. Mr. Rodman, of Crampton, enclosing one from her husband, written at Mr. Haddock's, and requesting him to forward it in the most direct manner to England, at the same time urging him to make inquiry for letters to him at the post office in New York. In this letter, Boyce in a few words told his wife of his forlorn condition as an inmate of the poor-house. But he also mentioned the kind friends he had found in the Haddocks, and hoped he should never again be forced to feel all the biting of want he had experienced. He said that his address at the present time was "care of Captain Bunce, Crampton."

In a short time, Mrs. Boyce with Alice, was on the way there, with little money to defray her expenses ; a stranger in the country, and depressed by the knowledge of her husband's state of health, the journey was a long one, and a weary one.

But we have seen its end. How blessed once more to meet—to see each other's faces in the flesh, and to renew the love of other days ; to talk of all the past and cheer each other with bright hopes of future joy. \* \* \* And yet hopes brighter than their reality. Boyce lingered on till the spring and died. So lingered on a little further the loving wife, and she too slept beside him ; their graves marked by the purest marble, for their lives had been innocent and good. And Alice was left alone—an orphan in a land of strangers, but by no means an unfriended, homeless orphan, still a *fatherless, motherless child*.

## CHAPTER XVI.

## JIMS at the Manse.

THE pastor of the old and well-known town of Crampton sat dozing in his chair in the south front room of the parsonage. The hour was about eight in the evening ; and as usual, from eight to nine, when he was wont to wake up and go to bed, sleepy—provided there were no appointments or calls abroad—he resigned himself to a leaning, easy snooze, with his feet on an elevated stool, his hands folded on his lap, his head and shoulders cast back upon the cushioned rocker, while his industrious, quiet wife knitted and sewed and trimmed the light. There was a large fire in the open Franklin stove; and occasionally a “snapping” stick would throw off a spark, anon a coal that broke the thread of the industrious sewer, and partially the dream of the sleeper, and which was instantly quenched by the shoe of the former, or pointed at with the finger of the latter, as one half-opened eye followed in its wake, and noted the place of its rest.

Thus the evening was weaving itself up. It was now eight—anon, eight and a quarter—presently it was eight and a half—thirty-five, and six, and seven. The wind was howling ; the snow began to slant on the windows, and to hum its flurry-tune. And yet it was comfortable *in the pastor's domestic south room*, and there was quiet *also, for it happened that there were no children in this*

family ; and Ann was busy in the kitchen over the ironing ; Growler lay quietly in his corner, and Tabby in hers. But outside the parsonage, and all along the road, through the woods, beside the creek, over the hill and down in the hollows, it was dark, stormy and drear.

I said it was "eight and thirty-five, six, and seven." It was just about that, and would soon be thirty-eight, nine, and then forty, when the pastor's wife was startled, and the pastor was startled, by the opening and slamming of the yard gate. Now this gate had rusty hinges and an iron latch and key ; and when opened and shut, it always made a great noise, that invariably awoke the dozing divine, and arrested the attention of his industrious and economizing lady. On the present occasion, they both aroused at the same instant, and they both exclaimed as usual, only with rather more than their ordinary interest, for it implied something serious ; it might be sickness, or a death, or a dying message, or a traveler benighted, or a contemplating bridegroom, or a seasonable present from a thoughtful parishioner, or a troubled conscience that would not rest. Something of an earnest and positive character hung on the hinges of the gate as eight, thirty and seven, and eight, walked up the dial-ladder *that* stormy December night.

So at least thought he—and with hand upraised, and breath held up to hear more, she, and both said, "There it is ! THE GATE !"

But before any more words were uttered, or time for any took place, there was a loud knock at the back-door opening into the hall. The servant-girl arrested her smoothing-iron, held it up a moment, listening ; then down it went on the red hot stove, and she seized a light. The pastor seized a light, his wife seized another ; and as they all met and stood in the hall the door sud-



denly opened. It was not locked ; nor was the outsider aware that any thing, even fashion or law, required him to wait in a storm after giving the usual sign of being there : so in he came. He was covered with snow ; his long hair fell over his shoulders, and filled up his face in part, through which, however, glowed two ruddy cheeks and flashing eyes. His features were coarse. His garments, as he shook off the snow, appeared to have nearly got through with service. His shoes were nearly twice too large for him, filled with snow, and his hat was a broken-in slouching felt.

The comer was a tall, overgrown boy, twelve or thirteen years of age perhaps, and as tall and thin as one may be at fifteen. Grown out of erect shape, his shoulders, back, chest, and limbs betrayed, in the general outline, a neglected fellow-creature—with how much of intellect by his Creator gifted, unknown. He was a shabby, sorry fellow, and yet awoke in you instinctive interest—perhaps compassion—perhaps suggestion. “Are you suffering ?” “Whence came, who, and what are you ?”

The intruder, opening the door on such a flood of light, stopped and gazed a moment in apparent surprise. He drew himself up, and looked at the company present to receive him with such an unusual display of lights, with a wild inquiring gaze, which every one of the trio returned in his and her usual and appropriate form of such expression. But the out-door hero came to himself first. He took off his hat, shook off the snow, and threw back his wetted locks and snow-covered coat.

“May be,” said he, “you don’t know it’s mighty hard snowing, d’ye ?”

“Well, my lad,” said the parson, “we havn’t been *out*, but we have heard it on the windows.”

"Glory! 's that all? I've been tracking in't two miles, and it's dumb'd plaguy soft and cold. But what's that to me? I'm out in all sorts of weather—wet, cold, and dry—and sleep where I can. It's a tough sort of life I leads any way; and so you'd think yourselves, providen you'd try it."

By this time the party had all got into the kitchen, where the cheerful fire in the stove seemed greatly to please the new comer, and led him to edge his way towards it.

"I suppose," said the pastor, "you wouldn't have come out to-night, if you had not been sent out on business?"

"No, sir, I just shouldn't. You see, the Lord sends the storms; the Lord sends fair weather, too; and it's the Lord who sends death."

"Is any one dead in the town?"

"Not as I knows of, exactly; the town is the rich people, I s'pose, and all the well off sort o' folks, ain't they?"

"Why, no; the town means the whole people, old and young, high and low, rich and poor."

"Well, I declar', if that isn't a great piece of news to me. Down in our place, the POOR don't seem to be reckoned much on, and I'd kinder tho't they only belonged to the town, and warn't the town itself, or any part of it."

"The poor of the town are just as much a part of the town as the rich, my lad, only—"

"'Only' they ain't as much tho't on, or needed, ay?"

"Ah! well—they are an unfortunate and suffering class of persons. But the town makes some, if not ample provision for their comfort."

"Yes, I s'pose so; but I reckon it's a sort of relief when any of the old criturs like aunt Dorothy goes off the handle—what?"

"Why, you see, it costs Captain Bunce a deal of money to feed um, and it's a gain when they dies. They do no sort of good, take it in the winter, and they need a plaguy site of soup and cider, and tea fixings, besides some more bed clothes, and other clothes, and fires. Consequence is, that the cost is mighty hard, Captain says, on the town, and on himself."

"Why, the town don't have any thing to do with those matters. He, the Captain, bears all those charges for so much a year, and it is his duty to keep them well, and see that they are comfortable every way."

"Is it, indeed! Well, I should like it if he only know'd this, for the Captain says his duty is to see that we don't starve nor freeze."

"Abominable!" said Mrs. Rodman.

"Cruel and horrible monster!" said Ann.

"And then you belong to the poor-house, do you?" kindly questioned Mrs. Rodman.

"Yes, I live there. I've been there a good while—it's sort of home to me."

"Then you like to live there, I suppose, better than you would to live any where else?"

"I s'pose so—don't know about other folks much—I likes Mr. Haddock."

"Is your mother, or your father alive, my boy?" she asked.

"No; they died great while ago—most afore I can remember. The Cap'n and Mrs. Bunce are my dad and ma'am, so they say."

"They probably know and can tell us all about the boy's parents," said Mr. Rodman to his wife, "they know if they are alive."

"*They don't, nuther!*" said the boy, with something of a fierce expression.

"How do you know, my lad?" soothingly asked the lady.

The boy's angry expression relaxed as he listened to her kind tones, and turned his eyes full on her amiable and smiling countenance—"Oh, ma'am," said he, "they sware at me, they flog me, they shut me up all day, they say if my father or mother was alive they'd send me home—they'd get me flogged from morning till night. Little do they know or care for me, but to call me names. What do they know about my father or mother, except that they's dead?"

"Well, it may be as you say, poor boy."

"When the people down there are sick, do they have good doctoring?" inquired the minister.

"We sometimes have doctoring, and sometimes not. I've no need of doctor's stuff. I takes care of myself. But old aunt Dorothy wanted doctoring, so all the poor folks say."

"Ah! Then if I now understand you, aunt Dorothy is dead?"

"Yes, sir, she's gone."

"When did this happen?"

"She took to ailing this mornin', and afore night, when the Cap'n said he guess'd the doctor'd happen round, she got crazy, and when it was good candle lighting, she ris up in the bed, shook her old crazy head, laughed out kinder wild, sung one of her old tunes, and fell back as dead as a door nail."

"Oh, dear!" sighed out the smitten wife of the pastor.

"A shocking death, I declare," said Ann.

"And now that the good old lady has breathed her last," said the minister, "what is your errand to me?"

"Well, the Cap'n says she must be buried as soon as

possible, for craziness is sort of catching, and scary any way, so he wants you should come down to-morrow at one o'clock to make the prayers and see to the fun'ral."

"I will endeavor to be there," was the low and solemn reply.

"But, husband, is it not strange to hurry her so soon to her grave?"

"Yes, it seems unnecessary. Yet, there the poor creatures are huddled together, and easily frightened, and rendered troublesome, and there are few to care for them. If one of them is really gone out of the world, the silent grave may as well receive the remains. What lessons will the living learn by keeping the unclaimed body from it?"

"Cruel, inhuman, desperate fate!" said she.

"The poor-house, Mrs. Rodman, is the worst refuge of religious humanity that claims to be an institution of mercy. My attention has of late been called to it by Mrs. Haddock and others, as you know. In fact, it is not called so much a mercy as a necessity. The TOWN PAUPERS must be supported; that is the rule under which they are leased out and cared for. But mercy would clothe them, warm them, feed them, comfort and bless them. Necessity but sells them to the lowest bidder—a bidder who cannot make any thing out of the job, if he exercises compassion. I am heartily, thoroughly sick of it, disgusted, mortified at its picture. How strange a fact is this in our social, Christian system. How has it come to be a universal condition of things—how discreditable to civilization, wealth, refinement, sociality and religion."

The boy who answered to the name of JIMS, seemed to listen to these remarks with an attentive ear. It was *plain that he understood something of what Mr. Rod-*

man had been saying, and was turning over in his mind a new development of thought.

Mr. Rodman continued—"The poor are, in all our towns, the most degraded, unfortunate, imbecile, unhappy class found in them. Every town has them. In some communities they are numerous, while in others they are few, but they all answer to one general, *broken-down* description. They have no money, often little character, few if any living friends and relations. They have been intemperate, vicious, idle, or extremely unfortunate beyond the bounds of ordinary charity to support them. They have, therefore, fallen into this last living destiny of humanity, the poor-house."

"Is it not possible to elevate them?" inquired his wife. "Cannot measures be taken to bring about an entire change in the system that now provides in part for them—so that the *selfishness of the benevolence* may not be so prominent?"

"We don't know how generally there may be an amelioration effected, and the comfort and alleviation of the poor secured; there are those who have deep feeling in regard to it, and I hope to live to see arrive a great improvement in our poor-houses."

"So do I, by George!" shouted the rude boy, starting up from his seat by the stove, and clapping his hands together smartly on his bare head. "Say what they will," he continued, "the poor-house is a darned patched up old consarn. It's so plaguy rotten you are afraid you'll fall through the floor into the cellar, and so c——d cold ——."

"Don't, *don't*, my dear boy," said Mrs. Rodman, "don't make use of such hard and wicked words. You can speak to us calmly, and in words that we shall understand *without using those severe and bitter expressions*

—can't you—now try." She said this with woman's sweetest and most persuasive smile.

The boy gulped down a whole sentence of oaths, and looked completely at a stand. At last, recovering a little, he began in a mild way—

"Down *there*—you know, at the poor-house—it's a—a—a terrible cold place. You see, there's a big fire-place, and a tarnal lot of wood, sich as they picks up, thrown in, but the old ricketty house hasn't many good doors, tight windows, warm floors, or good shingles on the roof. Wet weather drowns us, cold weather pinches us, hot weather smuthurs us, and I s—s—*swanny*, it's no use trying to git along, and be any body, BY—BY THUNDER!"

"Jist so ; an' you're right, sure ye ar," said Ann, with a deep indignation-color over her whole face, and with a voice almost as loud, too, as Jims.

"Well, they call you 'JAMES,' I suppose, at the poor-house?" asked the pastor.

"No, *sir* ; they call me 'JIMS.'"

"Would you not rather be called James?" inquired Mrs. Rodman.

"May be I should, if I got used to it. 'Jims' is good enough for poor folks, and we are all of us, as the parson says, *poor*. We're the poorest kind of folks. There ain't one of us who's got a sixpence, unless happen'd so, somehow. We don't own any thing, never call any thing our own in arnest, not even the clothes we have on, or the victuals we eat. Our cider is given to us. We don't seem to own our time, our comfort, our pen-knives, our loose strings in our pockets, the tools we work with, the beds we sleep on. No, *sir*, we ain't worth, as I can see, a copper. And, now, these poor folks, when they dies, as aunt Dorothy has, is they jist as bad off, or worse? *I've a notion*, because Cap'n Bunce so often 'wishes me

in ——, ' and ' d —— s' and ' c —— s me to ——, ' that there's a terrible site worse poor-houses in 'tother world than there is in our'n."

This was uttered with a wild, solemn, staring look, and Mr. Rodman, as well as he could under the circumstances, explained to him what the Bible revealed on the subject.

Jims said he believed there was a heaven for somebody, because the old widow Prescott often told him so, and urged him to be good and patient, and perhaps *he* would some time go there. But of this he professed to have considerable doubt.

"Good Mrs. Prescott!" said the pastor's wife, "and who is she, Jims?"

"Oh, she's one of us; she's an old body, in a neat *let-tle* room all alone by herself, and I thinks she's as good a body as there is amongst us—but, zounds, here it is past nine o'clock, and two miles of snow to waller through yet."

"You had better stay here," said all at once.

"No, no; I've got to help Cap'n Bunce in the morn-ing, and he'd be jist mad enough to *hide* me if I warn't there arly."

At this moment another loud knock at the door arrested every one's attention. Mr. Rodman took a light into the hall and cried out, "Come in!" The storm, which had not in the least abated, seemed to come into the hall as fast as the outsiders themselves, who were an old, tipsy, clumsily moving man, shabbily dressed, and a woman in a coarse close hood, through which a face was seen glowing with the fires of a life of intemperance and brutal exposure.

Both Mr. and Mrs. Rodman knew them at once. They were old residents of the town, vagrants, paupers,



thieves, wasters, who led a gipsey sort of life, though in general bringing themselves round to their own crazy, storm-exposed cabin, situated on a lonely bye-path of the town, near a swamp and a high rocky range of hills. Occasionally, they were "on the town," in consequence of great inebriacy, sickness, actual want, or for minor offences that in them the town could adjudicate. They were now under the care of the town. What had driven them forth on such a night as this?

Jims started up on their appearance, stared at them, and they at him. At length he abruptly vociferated—

"Well, old Jock Tucker, what y're arter up here this time o'night, hay? and you, too, old Pol?"

"None yer bisness, Jims."

"'Tis tother—"

"No, it ain't, you young varmint!" said the hag, shaking her long arm towards him.

"Well, well, good people," said Mr. Rodman, "don't get into a quarrel here now. Just be orderly. Come up and warm yourselves."

"Why, Polly Tucker!" said Mrs. Rodman—"is it possible you can be wandering about in such a storm as this, and seeming to have no care for yourself! How it looks in you, a woman! And besides that, it will be very likely to make you really sick. How is it possible you can do so?"

"Oh, la sus! Mrs. Rodman, we can't live at the poor-house any way. It's a mighty worse way than living in the street, or in a decent prison. We won't live in the poor-house any longer than we are made to—that's flat!" said she, with terrible firmness.

"I'll tell yer what it is," said Jims. "You've just run away—that's it."

"None your bisness," said Tucker again.

"'Tis!" said Jims. "You got scart, did ye! ha! ha! Because old aunt Dorothy's dead, you made off. Ha! ha! I'm mighty tickled that old Jock and Polly's got out the house, for they're as ugly as bulls, and as scary as owls."

Luckily Jims, as he said this, darted warily to the door and out into the storm, for thus he avoided a heavy blow aimed at his head by Tucker with his large cane; Polly, at the same time, snatching her hood from her head and hurling it at him with the utmost violence of manner.

"Little c—s!" said Tucker, biting his teeth.

"Tut, tut! Mr. Tucker, remember I don't accustom myself or family to the hearing of profane words."

"Well, right *is* right. You're the *best* man, Parson Rodman, that I ever did see, and I ax your pardon ten thousand times. I never swears lest I git riled, and that's not of'en, is it, Pol?"

"Yes," said she, "every day."

"It's a darned lie, any how!"

So the brutal pair went on. They finally pushed off into the storm, to go to their own cold, desolate hut, only asking for some cold victuals to put in their bag, which Tucker slung over his shoulder. They would not stay over night: evidently they were afraid "Captain Bunce" might be after them to return them to the POOR-HOUSE.

"I wish I knew more about that boy," said Mrs. Rodman. "His countenance interests me, and his condition awakens my solicitude."

"He is the boy who was thought to have burnt Captain Bunce's barn," said her husband.

"Is he!"

"To be sure. A very bright boy naturally, but so

educated there as almost to destroy him, both for this world and the next."

"Have our ladies done any thing yet for the paupers?"

"I don't know," said he. "I suppose they have; but really I don't know."

"Well, do you find out to-morrow and let me know," said she, and the conversation dropped.

## CHAPTER XVII.

THE Tuckers.\* Very remarkable character like that of a Johnson, a Pitt, a More, a Bonaparte, or a Washington, but occasionally gleams on the path of human life. It becomes our duty, consequently, to ponder well every such appearance, and endeavor to estimate the chances in favor of any one age or country reaping the honor of it; for great, indeed, is that honor.

WE have spoken of the Tuckers, and as inmates, occasionally, of the poor-house. It is now time that something should be said more definitely about them, inasmuch as quite a link in the history of this tale of poverty and misery hangs on them.

In early life John Tucker married Polly Gooms, a wild, stout, ignorant girl, and who, whatever were the ways and fortunes of John, clave unto him and them to the end.

Accordingly, as he became a roving, careless, drinking vagabond, so did she. They occupied, as their own property, a small two-story house, grown crazy by neglect and hard usage, situated far from any main road in the town, quite at the extreme end of a grass-grown street and lane, the upper parts of which were fenced in, so that no teams went along there without taking down the bars. Notwithstanding its apparently lone-

\* This story of the Tuckers, their mode of life, their house, its location, its demolition, the burning scene, and some other matters woven in the same, is given as a *Connecticut* story, true to fact, by the AUTHOR, who never knew, however, why the house was called their property, nor by what right, whether of possession, deed, or otherwise they held it as theirs. It is certain that a pauper, *de facto*, cannot own property over a small amount. He becomes a pauper because of his necessity.

some position, it was in a romantic spot ; in the summer, a most attractive and beautiful retreat. Behind the house there grew a large cluster of tall hickory and oak trees ; and beyond this, there was a green and luxuriant pasture for the neighbors' cows, for on the parallel streets the farmers' dwellings were numerous. On the north grew a natural forest of large extent, and in the centre there was an extensive swamp, wild and overgrown, where luxuriant grapes, and native plums, and scrawny apples flourished, and in the openings cranberries, raspberries, blackberries, wild cherries, strawberries, whortleberries, etc. This forest was a great protection to the house in winter from the winds. It also invited the occupants to ramble there on business or pleasure at all seasons—as for fallen (!) fire wood in the season of cold, or in the summer for nuts, and fruit, and berries, by the sale of which they might replenish their lessening stores of provision and whisky. In front of the house, between it and the lane, there was a little garden lot for potatoes, onions, beets, cucumbers, radishes, parsnips, corn, etc., but usually allotted to weeds ; for whisky drinkers in general are poor gardeners—pomology and horticulture have little interest to them. A low wall, much rolled down and crushed together by time and frequent clambering over, separated this lot from the grass-grown lane, and across this there spread away to the East an open, enchanting prospect over the valley, where the streams meandered, and little hillocks were covered with flocks, and wide meadows overgrown with rankest grass and sweet-flavored clover ; where the corn grew tall and luxuriantly, and other grain waved to and fro in the gentle breezes that wandered there ; and in the blue distance rose the beetling hills, and the waves of the sea *washed their ragged base, and ships slumbered at their anchors.*

Above all this, on the far-off hill-side or slope, was the old cottage of Tucker ; and though it looked on the loveliest scenery and landscape in nature, it was a desolate, forsaken, smoky, blasted abode. No love, virtue, or peace ; no order, thrift, or cleanliness was there. It was the habitation of foul and hateful spirits, the home of vagrancy and intemperance.

Beside this cottage, on the same height and street, a little removed to the South, there was a single other house in sight through the trees—the cherry trees, the pear, the apple trees—a small red cottage, occupied by an aged couple by the name of Warren. They were both infirm, and their children had all left them, to engage in business ways more in accordance with their notions of life than the simple mode of their parents. Occasionally they made flying visits to the homestead, and so, in the time of fruits, came to see the old couple scores of their friends and acquaintances in town.

This aged pair, without the power to lend assistance, or to fly if danger threatened to come near them, not unfrequently heard the midnight orgies of the Tuckers. Oft the cry of "murder," and screams for help, came to them through the branches of the trees, and in the morning, they were glad to learn it, if nothing worse than bruises and swollen eyes resulted from the low debauch.

Polly had her seasons of partial sobriety ; and then the neighboring farmers' wives, on washing, and scrubbing, and all-work days, would draw her into service. Occasionally John, also, would do a little work, but never any thing like a good day's service, at hoeing, mowing grass, or harvesting grain. John was nobody's right-hand-man for help. Indeed, they were both little *better or other than home-made gipsies—vagrants of the*

lowest type of humanity. For the little help they now and then rendered, they were paid in money, pork, eggs, grain, clothing, and the like. But they laid not by the money, neither ate the food, nor wore the garments. Every thing that could purchase whisky went for whisky, and they ate and wore something poorer.

And so what was duty in the case? If Mrs. Rodman, the pastor's wife, gave her twenty-five cents for half a day's work, it was sure to be spent for rum—in the end it was as if Mrs. Rodman had sent and bought for her a jug of intoxicating liquor! Of course this was a great perversion of her wishes and intentions in hiring and paying her. Many needed her help, and were of course willing, as obliged to pay for it if rendered, so that this was a trial to the ladies. What should they do in the case? Many a one said, "I will not hire my work done by one whom I know will spend the money she receives for it to procure the means of a disgraceful and disgusting debauch; I will sooner let it remain undone—or attempt it myself." But there were always some feeble women, and hard pressed farmers, who occasionally let go every other consideration if they could obtain their help.

We have said that Tucker's house was desolate and forbidding whatever were its natural advantages. True, it lay in the direction many of the neighboring farmers took when by some one or another path, over the broad pastures and intervening wood-lands, they sought a nearer way than by the road to church, town meeting, public fair, or to their acquaintances and friends in other parts of the town, but seldom did the passers by call and go in. John was often seen at the door of his cabin smoking his pipe, or perhaps lounging around the *premises in drunken, beastly imbecility and stupidity,*

or with bloated, haggard and glaring features, leaning over the fence, or hard up against a corner of his house ; and Polly was like him. They were drunk together, and so if ever sober. Sometimes they were mutually very cross, savage and brutal ; at other times they were simple, foolish and talkative. They had their seasons of spasmodic penitence, strange as it may seem ! Then they confessed their sins, wept over their life, promised to do better, and to seek for the truth. But their goodness soon evaporated ; their reforms were sure antecedents to a drunken revelry and row. In matters of ordinary worldly care, they were wholly thriftless, careless of property, reckless of to-morrows, wasters, wandering, dissolute vagabonds. Call them gipsies, but then they fell below the gipsy in point of true character. They were samples, good and true, of intemperance, ignorance, profanity and vice.

As for their dwelling, it never knew the luxury of paint, and seldom, except on its outside when the rains fell, did it enjoy the dashing over it of water, accompanied by the scrubbing hand of an active and energetic housewife. The floors were partly torn up for fuel ; the clapboards on the outside stripped off for the same purpose, and the steps were gone—probably the same way. The house throughout bore no marks of neatness, no signs of order ; nothing within it was attractive. It had no carpets, no window curtains, no soft, downy beds and pillows ; nor had it soft ottomans, *tete-a-tetes*, and no rocking-chairs, no neat crockery filled the closets, no well-furnished larder supplied the table-dinners ; sadirons were wanting in the chimney fire-place, and the very wood on the fire was stolen from the fences and the neighboring forests, to the great irritation of the owners.

*Notwithstanding these things, they brought up quite*



a family of children, some of whom, despite their parentage, went away at an early age, and, forming virtuous associations, became respected men and women! But they sought in vain to influence their parents to give up their nomadic for a fixed and virtuous mode of life: others lived with them and became likewise dissolute and wicked.

The house was the resort of the lowest vagrants. Men and women who wandered every where accursed by their own ways of wantonness and sin, here frequently passed whole days and nights together, carousing in the most disgusting ways, and separating only as hunger and thirst drove them asunder. These were for the most part the wandering subjects of the poor-house in town and out of it, or those who were from low grogeries here and there, rapidly forming characters for the institutions of vagrancy.

Out of this admixture of lewdness and criminality, occasionally it happened that the town gained a moiety of new population, despite the loss in morals and wholesome order. And so it sometimes happened, further, that the icy touch of death here rested on a victim, and then a funeral went forth from the drunken house of Tucker.

"Blarney Moll," as she was called, his oldest daughter, died here at twenty-three, a poor creature. And another perished in a city where she often strayed. The last that died was "Annie Sue," six years before this present time, at the age of twenty-five. She was a regular town-pauper—was rather stupid, though not a very wild, noisy, daring creature, and she really bore some marks of feminine delicacy and interest. A child of hers died in two weeks from its birth, and the manner in which *its place was supplied*, brings us to an interesting part of our story.

We have spoken of the Warrens who lived in the neighborhood of Tuckers.

A young mother lay dying there. \* \* \* \* \*

Let us here mention something of her previous history :

Julia Carlile was the only child of Henry and Elizabeth Carlile, very respectable inhabitants of Crampton, who bestowed on her their united endearments, and commenced to give her a finished education. But before she was twelve years of age she lost her mother, and just after she was thirteen, her father. A great misfortune to a young girl—a great, irreparable loss to Julia, who, in consequence, was thrown upon the care of an elderly aunt whose ways and government she thoroughly disliked. Naturally very impulsive, she grew to be extravagantly wild and thoughtless, neglectful of her studies and general cultivation of the mind, and graces of the heart and life. Mindful more of her own wishes than of her aunt's, and contrary to her expostulations, she permitted the attentions of James Sherman, a dashing blade of the town, a fond son of his parents, but a spendthrift, and in love with ways of life that awakened at first the solicitude of his father and mother, and at last their opposition and rebuke. In two months after the sudden death of her aunt she was married to Sherman, then being nineteen years of age. Mr. Sherman was highly incensed and mortified. So much was he distressed at the conduct of his son, that he soon sold off all his property and removed to the West, leaving James a very slender portion. With care and economy even on this he might have built up for himself a small, quiet home, and have had a comfortable maintenance. But his pride was wounded, and he became by-and-bye more than usually idle and wasteful in his habits. Of course the path of temptation is ever widening to its victims,

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and James found it so. Not a great while was it ere he played hard and drank deep. Of Julia he was passionately and truly fond. They greatly loved each other, and the marriage had on her an effect directly the reverse of him—she became more thoughtful and industrious. But James' love of his wife was not strong enough to save him, his evil genius triumphed—not even the death of their first two children sobered and reformed him. He became ruinously intemperate, and before their third child was born forsook wife and home and sailed for the West Indies, where, she learned afterwards, soon after his arrival he fell a victim to the yellow fever.

When this distressing news reached her, she was occupying a hired chamber in another town, the mortgage on their house having expired, and the holder of the claim being unwilling that she should remain in it. Left as no young wife could wish to be, without the presence of her husband, suffering from poverty, loneliness, and neglect, Julia hardly knew which way to turn for relief, and in her heart of hearts bitterly lamented the days of her youthful heedlessness and folly.

Divine Providence takes far better care of his creatures than they do of themselves, and especially sends relief to those who earnestly cry to Him, and also strive to help themselves. So it proved in Julia's case. As she anxiously, day after day, inquired, "What shall I do? where shall I go? who will befriend me?" she remembered her maternal great uncle, Isaac Warren, the infirm old neighbor to citizen John Tucker, whom we have before mentioned. She immediately went and cast herself on his protection. The good old man and his wife received her with the utmost kindness, and forthwith made her more comfortable than she had been for several weeks past.

We have said a young mother lay dying at the Warrens. *This was Julia.* She had been with them eight weeks, and her third child was now about a week old.

Every thing earthly—all considerations of family, home, affection other than the affection that now centred in the little infant at her side, led Julia to desire to leave the world. For the sake only of the babe, she wished to live, and in that point of view, it seemed to her cruel to die, although she was fully aware that she could not recover. When left alone, she would often address her little, unconscious one in words that came warm and fresh from her thoughts—"My dear little child! My sweet baby boy! Mother must leave you. Who will love you and take care of you? How I cling to you, sweet one! I fear to leave you in this cold world alone—poor, poor child! But God will take care of my baby. God will feed him. Heaven will guard the darling little lamb. Yes—oh, yes, may its mercy bless the innocent." Then she would mourn over her husband—"I loved him; I gave him my whole heart; I pitied him; I mourned for him; I mourn him still. Poor forsaken one. Ruined? How can it be? Forsaken—sick—dying—in a strange land too! But I have never forgotten him—never. I have loved on as at first, and shall do so to the end. My own—my all. My husband—precious in the recollections of the past. I come to you. I forget you not—no, never, nor shall I in death forget, or forsake you."

Cherishing these sentiments so honorable to herself, and comforting to her heart, the young and lovely one passed gently away, and the aged couple closed her eyes in their last sleep.

Not long after Mrs. Sherman died. "Annie Sue" came into the house weeping for the death of her own

babe. And as the Warrens were perplexed what to do with their little charge, and by little and little came at last to realize what a providential arrangement this was for at least the present rearing of the child, and "Annie Sue" herself joyfully acquiesced in the plan, they gave her the orphan babe and she became his nursing mother !

Before Julia died she called for a pen, and while she yet had strength enough for the effort, she wrote as follows : " Call my baby JAMES, after his father. This is the dying request of his mother ; and let him know he had a true and kind father, and a mother who loved him to the last. (Signed) Crampton, January 15, 183—, Julia Carlile Sherman." She then asked for a little, delicate silver-mounted tobacco-box, which had been his father's, and bore his name on the lid, and into it, after carefully folding, she pressed the paper.

This was the mother of JIMS !

As for "Annie Sue," she nursed the child, and called it her own. But in every sense he was a pauper, by his parental title, by his foster mother's claim, and his own necessity. "Annie Sue" at length would hear to no compromise by which she should resign the child. And as the old people were rather ashamed of having given it up in the first place, they kept the matter secret—only the old couple kept possession of the box and its precious testimony.

Although "Annie Sue" had now been dead some five or six years, leaving Jims on the town as a pauper, old Mr. Warren survived and still kept the document that affirmed the actual parentage and legitimacy of our young hero.

In his possession there were also some other papers and writings, incidental fragments of the family history.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

**CRAPE** for Aunt Dorothy. Crape is a great institution. It belongs to the Genus Sackcloth, and so hails from Job, and other far off Personages. Government goes for crape. An Administration that wouldn't vote "thirty days" crape would be put down; Jobbers and Consumers would rouse the nation and Old Monopoly get awfully crushed between them. You never see a Dignitary, a Dogmatist, a Delectable, a sensible Bachelor, or a sincere Widower who marries the second and third time only for the sake of his children, despising crape!

**QUITE** to the surprise of Jims, early in the morning appeared John and Polly Tucker at the poor-house, comparatively sober, come to pay their respects to the remains of old aunt Dorothy. It seems that during the night they had fallen into a discussion on the propriety of wearing mourning for her, and as one was in favor, and the other in doubt at least, they came down to discuss the point with their fellow-sufferers, the mourning and bereaved paupers.

It was a self-evident fact that somebody must act the part of mourners for aunt Dorothy, and as she had living no near relations, Captain Bunce and the paupers were in duty bound to pay her this respect.

John and Polly started the subject immediately on their arrival at the poor-house precincts. It was forthwith discussed with considerable animation:

"It is very proper indeed," said the widow Prescott, "and I am glad you have mentioned it. She was an old lady, a citizen of the town, that every body used to know, and she was good to us—now she is gone, we ought by all means to put on mourning." So thought



Mrs. Rice, an old, infirm body, who walked with a staff, and aunt Joanna Dodge, whose husband, once smart and rich, kept the turnpike gate, at the time of his death being poor and friendless ! " By all means," said they, " go into mourning. How it would look not to do so ! " " Never was any thing more rational," said tall Ebenezer Cowles, who was once a tanner in the town and became poor, and who was considerably intemperate and often very piously inclined and talkative, " she was a good soul with all her failings—I say mourning for her is duty." So thought Birge the shoemaker—and Mag said, " mourning will be becoming, because everybody ' goes into it ' when a friend djes—we shan't be singular ! "

" That's my opinion," said John Tucker.

" We owe it to the dead," said Mrs. Rice and Mrs. Prescott.

" And to the living," said Birge and Cowles.

" To society of course," said aunt Joanna Dodge. " What would society think of us if nobody here put on mourning for aunt Dorothy ? "

" True," said Mrs. Rice, " we ought especially to consult the feelings of the world."

" Why so ? " grumbled Dan.

" Because the world has always put on mourning for the departed."

" Well," said the gruff old pauper, " you see if the world puts it on for *her*,—"

" That's what I'm thinking," said Polly.

" So was I," said Bill.

" But the point is," said Tucker, " what *we* ought to do."

" Well, it is my opinion," said Mrs. Prescott, " that *all of us who can*, ought to go to the grave, and as far as *possible in deep crape*."

"That is just what I think," said Mrs. Rice, "it's the way that every body does, and we can't escape our duty because we are *here*."

"Well now," said Mag, "if we are going into deep mourning, we must all go immediately to work, for the funeral is at one, and there'll be none too much time. You know the bonnets have to be trimmed, and the dresses flounced with crape, and gloves and veils prepared—it will take all our time and all our efforts to get ready."

All agreed that this was true, but no one moved.

"When my poor man died," said Mrs. Dodge, "we went into mourning of course, and it took the whole time of two days to get ready, and the Lord knows I was in mourning enough without that."

"I think we might borrow a good many things," said Mrs. Prescott. "It's a chastening Providence, Mrs. Dodge, when one loses a friend, and one likes to regard it properly. No doubt the heart is in mourning without crape. But then it's the universal practice to appear in black, you know?"

"Oh, yes, to be sure," said that lady, with a long drawn sigh.

"Well, I reckon," said Tucker, "mourning for the dead goes a great way to reconcile us to Providence; it seems to look as if one felt it *dreadfully*!"

"At all events it is good for the heart of *man*, John Tucker," said the widow.

"I think if there's any good in it," said Mag, "it's a pity it wasn't thought of for the town paupers a good while ago."

"Why so?" inquired Polly.

"Because they lose about their full share of friends every year, and it wouldn't be a bad idea to keep them

in mourning the year round. *It would do their poor souls good !*"

Mrs. Prescott was rather ruffled at this sarcastic cut of the old hag, and said in reply, "Nobody ever mourned too much."

"The richest people in the world," said Mag, "always get the most good, aunt Prescott, when their friends die, you know !"

"How so ?"

"Why, they dress in crape from head to foot, and it's all ordered in 'cap-a-pie' style from the shops, and their attention isn't distracted by sewing, and borrowing, and fitting, and calculating, and so on and so forth—they've nothing to do but put on their new-made crape fixings when they come, and keep weeping, too, from morning to night."

"Poor souls !" exclaimed Mr. Ebenezer Cowles.

"How much they *may* mourn !" said Mrs. Polly Tucker.

"What a benevolent example to the poor !" said Mrs. Rice.

"How kind they can be in giving away their mourning things to somebody else," said Mrs. Dodge.

"Rich mourners have a good time of it in cities," said Mag, "they ride to the cemetery through the handsomest streets, in smart coaches, all dressed in their new crapes, and smile out of the windows as they go, as if they'd got the mourning all on their clothes on the outside."

"Why, Mag Davis !" said Roxy.

"Ain't it so, Dan ?"

"Why shouldn't it be ?" said he, "they're glad at heart, for they've got a new pile of money, and that pays for the outside rig, coaches and all."

"And middling sort of folks copy the example, and *pay as they can*," said Jims, who had hitherto said nothing, *but sat a la Turk* in the midst of them.

"Yes, Jims is right, by thunder!" said Tucker.

"And who pays for *poor folks*?" inquired Polly.

"Captain Bunce," said some.

"The town," said others.

"There are *four* things to settle about," said Mag. "There's, first, whether we'll go into mourning; next, who'll furnish it; and then, third, whether we shall ride to the grave; and last, if we'll have prayers at church."

Now who will say that these poor creatures, once accustomed to all these ceremonies, should not be allowed them still? Is a mourning suit, is a mourning carriage, is a church prayer for the dead merely for you and for me, who happen to stand on our feet, and are nobody's poor? They felt the loss of an old comrade, or fellow, as sincerely as any other class. Their family was invaded by death—a very prominent member of it was stricken from the roll, and now the education of earlier life taught them to put on crape.

But when they sent to Captain Bunce to know whether he thought they should do so, and to advise about it, what answer do you think the Captain gave them?

"Go into mourning for old aunt Dorothy!" exclaimed he; "what, the town paupers go into mourning! If that ain't a joke, I'll give up. Ha! ha! ha! ha! If that isn't rich, I can't tell what is. It ought to go on the town records, and into all the newspapers. The *town paupers* of Crampton, who arn't worth, the whole kit and boodle of them, two bright cents in the world, come to me to ask if they shan't put on a regular suit of crape! By the L——," said he, "I shall die of laughing. Ha! ha! ha! ha! I wonder old aunt Dorothy don't sing them a psalm tune in her coffin. And then they propose coaches—and even prayers on the Sabbath! I vow I believe the world *is* coming to an end. They seem to think as much

of themselves as if they were lords of the soil, with money at interest. And yet it would be fun alive to see the old crones dressed out in mourning! All Crampton would laugh for a fortnight." The Captain loved a joke. There was not an inhabitant of the town who was more fond of one. A real good laugh, moreover, always seemed to do him good, only sometimes it seemed to shake him up rather more than most persons would call comfortable. He had a way when the paroxysm lasted, or when it was at its height, of holding on to something like a door-handle, or the back of a chair, or a tree, or a post, throwing back his head, looking right up towards the sky, and thus stayed up he could give way to the enjoyment till the tears ran down his cheeks, and his cheeks grew red, and the perspiration gathered in large quantities all over him. So he took this joke. One of his laughing paroxysms, lasting ten or fifteen minutes, quite unmanned him for any earnest, soberly employment, and he vowed again and again that he hadn't been so much amused since he took the paupers—"It was the very height of the ridiculous."

Most every body would agree with him. Why, what nonsense to think of a parcel of broken down, disfranchized, vagrant old paupers presuming to do as society in its best condition finds expensive, a terrible—a—a—terrible bore! Put on mourning for one that society thinks is better off by *seven cents a day*, at least, for dying? Are these people, the survivors, to ride in our carriages to the grave—to borrow *our* hats and shawls? Ridiculous! Is *our* minister to preach them a funeral sermon in our church and make them a *prayer*? Nonsense! nonsense! nonsense! No, "let them," as Mr. Savage says, "*let them slide.*" They are little better than *dead themselves*. And where's the sense in making

such an ado about a half dozen paupers, when a hundred smart, rich, decent folks are burnt up or drowned in one steamboat disaster, or killed in a smash-up of the cars in little less than no time, and forgotten in seven days ! I say, where's the sense in making so much ado over a small lot of paupers ? Arn't they the poorest sort of humanity that's alive—a bill of expense, a town-charge, always wanting something—and complaining ? What good do they do for the public ?—as Savage says—“ *Let them slide !*”

“ Seriously,” said the Captain, “ you'd do well, all of you, to wash yourselves up, and comb your hair, for the parson will be here soon, and the funeral will be over before you can count twelve. Come, now, stir round, be lively, and get things in order here !”

Thus repulsed, the paupers went shivering about the rooms and premises ; the old women feeling happy if among their worn clothing they could find a bit of soiled crape to tie over a dilapidated cap ! And so the mourning for aunt Dorothy was confined to the heart.

## CHAPTER XIX.

**SERMON** to the Paupers. Was it or was it not a Gospel Endeavor? There is a great itching now-a-days to preach Homiletics and Philosophie Yarns, and some preach like Yellow Dandelions and Buttercups! The Gospel's the Gospel for a' that, and happy soul is he who preaches it.

At one o'clock Mr. Rodman arrived, and still it snowed. The storm of the night had filled the roads with snow, and the wind had piled it here and there so as greatly to impede the traveling. Mr. Rodman, on his way down, was frequently obliged to get out of his sleigh and break the road open before his horse could proceed. It was difficult to convey a coffin to the grave under these circumstances, and some persons would, in a like state of things, have deferred the funeral to another day, especially as the storm would prevent many of the mourners from arriving, and others from going to the grave. But neither of these objections weighed a feather in the case of aunt Dorothy. She hadn't a friend the less at her funeral for the storm, nor a carriage the less went to the grave. And it was no object to keep her corpse a moment above ground beyond the appointed hour, as no one could receive from it the least possible good, and the society at the poor-house wanted all the room there was in that institution.

Captain Bunce hardly regained his usual composure sufficiently to look concerned and sorry, when the clergyman arrived, especially as he observed the effort made by all the paupers to look *as if* in mourning. The *widow Prescott* had on her very cleanest cap, an old

relic of other days, musty with time and careful preservation in a tight drawer, around it circling a plain band of mourning ribbon. Prink and prim she sat near the head of the coffin, and appeared as chief mourner. One and another had found some rag or strip of black for dress, hat, or cap; the instinct natures, or education, and the longing for mourning, inducing the conceit in them that it made the sad obsequies of aunt Dorothy more accordant with the mournful Providence! And all, as Captain Bunce directed, had washed them, and brushed and combed their locks. There sat they, grouped together, the aged, feeble, pale, sallow, simple ones, with the younger also, equally squalid and wretchedly clad, with lustreless eyes and sad, desponding features—mere wrecks of humanity, dependent on the cold charity of the world for every comfort, however small, that they enjoyed, and pining away, nearly helpless from old age, or from chronic diseases they had no power of constitution to resist—who were sure victims of cold and wet, and burning heat, and especially of any prevailing sickness or epidemic in the community around. And they sat together as mourners—the chief mourners in the case of a departed companion, in the tribulation of this weary “mortal state.” Though too poor to buy them a mourning habit, the God of nature clad every countenance of them with a grief that spoke the language of a true sorrow, and they looked to the observer as really weeping for the dead, as though it had not been to her an infinite gain!

Thus hold we all to life.

Mr. and Mrs. Haddock were at the funeral, and two or three other neighbors. The minister, Mr. Rodman, before the prayer, made a short address to the people, *and selected as the ground of his remarks the solemn*



words of Scripture, "*So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God.*" Mr. Rodman was a very good dissector of Bible truth, and of human character. He knew very well that nothing would reach the human depraved heart, if the words of the gospel failed of this, and he was, consequently, very faithful and skilful in exposing the heart, and applying to it the healing word of truth. This was his usual character. But the congregation he now addressed was somewhat new, a little out of his usual routine, and he had some difficulty in choosing the course of argument with them, that would enable him most effectually to meet their necessities, and so improve their hearts. He had felt this before, it is true, on like occasions, but never did he more sensibly so feel it than now. After coming to a decision, he attempted to perform his duty in a faithful, though affectionate manner.

Apprising them of their loss, he then called their attention to two very serious and important truths presented in the words of the text. First, the universal fact, that we ourselves, and all men must appear before God. Second, the equally solemn and universal truth that we must give a personal account of our life to God. Under the first department of thought, he assured them that they would all, one after another, leave the world and appear before their Maker. He told them, that not one of their number could possibly avoid this ; there being no age long enough to outlive the Almighty, no arm strong enough to resist death, no secret place where one might cover himself from view, no flight so distant whereunto the arrow of the King of Terrors would not follow them. He further represented the different modes of death and times of it, and assured *them that as it had been with the deceased so would it*

prove with them, that they must go alone out of the world, how many friends or companions soever they might now have around them. Death would cut them all down.

Under the second division of the subject, he represented earnestly the great and solemn fact that any one who goes into eternity is a sinner, condemned and vile, and utterly lost forever, in consequence of his sinfulness, except as he may have the forgiveness of God through repentance of sin and faith in the merits of the Saviour, the Lord Jesus. He represented the certainty of a solemn, searching, judgment day, when the hearts of all men would be laid open, and every one, willing or unwilling, be required to give a strict account of himself to God, the Searcher of Hearts. "Then," said he, "what a painful revelation of the sins and follies of life will be made! Is it not enough to startle and affright you here? Do you not tremble when you think of your manifold iniquities—the sins, and all the shameful vices of your lives? Oh! how will they appear before the great white throne—before God the judge of the world?" He besought them to consider these solemn truths then, even while gathered around the cold remains of their deceased friend, and so by timely repentance escape the horrors of the judgment day.

Mr. Rodman's prayer was in some sense a repetition of his sermon, although as he got nearer and nearer to the mercy-seat it waxed more fervent, and breathed out earnest and affectionate supplications in behalf of the desolate group that surrounded him.

Mr. Rodman had begun to see and to feel the misery—the blight and mildew of the poor-house system under which these wrecks of humanity were plodding their way to the grave. Frequent short conversations with

the Haddocks and Phillips' had contributed to awaken his interest in the matter, so that he was often found alluding to the poor in his sermons and prayers, to the evident surprise and discontent of his parishioners, Messrs. Smith, Newcombe, Shire & Co. But still his eyes were holden that he should not see the whole truth.

After the services of the hour were closed, he went among the people—the paupers, shaking hands with all and saying a few words to them. As he came near where Mag Davis was sitting, coiled up something like a catamount ready to spring on her prey, she spoke out in her usual sententious and sarcastic manner—"Your sermon, parson Rodman, was, I doubt not, every word 'ont true, but it was no new thing to one of us ; we've all of us sinned under just sich truth of the law all our born days, having had the law but not kept it. Now, havn't you a Gospel for such poor devils as we are—some invitation, some entreaty, some word of marcy—some promise—hey ?"

"Don't be troubling the minister here," said Captain Bunce, rudely coming up and making preparations to receive the coffin, which consisted of the plainest stained boards, with few—very few ornaments ! "Mr. Rodman is tired, and we have much to do !"

The conversation closed, and Mr. Rodman fell back to his place, but the arrow had left the bow, and it quivered deep in his own soul. His sermon had recoiled on himself, and the whole power of its thunder was echoing along the domains of his own heart. He had proclaimed the terrors of the law to those who knew the law, but yet had all their life known and resisted it, were still *resisting* it. They had not felt the tender pleadings of *the Gospel*—had not so seen the suffering Saviour and

his cross, as that their sorrow and love were revived, but they stood trembling when the Gospel might, and the Gospel alone could do them good. Mr. Rodman's eyes were now opened, and he was FOREVER made a soul-friend and pleader for these miserable, wretched outcasts, the forgotten people of the gay and busy world. And all the way to the grave he meditated over the subject. He accused himself bitterly, too, for his past blindness and obtuseness of heart; that he could see the poor wretches suffer and die without reflecting on their need of all the consolations the Gospel is fitted to impart to them—without sympathy for them, without any earnest thought or action in their behalf, they of the highways and hedges, for whom the son of God suffered and proclaimed the Gospel!

Aunt Dorothy's remains were taken to their last resting place on a large common sleigh bottom. It was usual to take the bodies of inmates of the poor-house to their burial in a similar manner. A hearse was not thought of for a moment. The funeral charges of a pauper are not, says the law, "to exceed six dollars." In the summer, when one died, the remains were carried in a sort of lumber-wagon. The whole thing was economically arranged, and the grave was made along side of others from the poor-house, so that the general locality could be known without the necessity of particularizing it by the help of marble! No head-stones were furnished for their graves. They slumbered in them who were their tenants, forgotten and unknown, till the judgment morn.

The storm was a fearful one in which aunt Dorothy's corpse was lowered to its rest, forbidding all remarks, and requiring every degree of exertion. and all haste possible. *But the tempest of the old songstress' mind*

was hushed ; her cares and difficulties were ended. Little thought or cared she for the storm that howled a requiem over her.

As they turned away from the grave, Mr. Rodman observed the slender form of Jims in the snow, holding his horse by the head. "Thank you, my lad," said he, "I am sorry that I can't talk with you a little, but we must all hurry away. Will you come up and see me some one of these days, eh?"

Jims rolled up his hat from off his eyes and said, "I'll come when the next one goes off, if the Cap'n says so."

"Eh?"

"I say, when the next one of us tips the bucket, I'll come and tell you."

"Oh, ho! I suppose I understand you. But I should like to see you any other time, so good-bye ; come if you can."

Jims put his hands in his pockets, and was staring after him, when he felt himself seized by the collar and jerked violently backwards into the snow, at the same time the voice of Captain Bunce, like a bull bellowing in a tornado, rung in his ears. "Don't stand there with your hands in your breeches, boy, but help fill up this grave! There now, pull in the gravel with that hoe. Here, Dan ; work nimbly, boys, or we shall get covered up by this tremendous snow-storm. Hang her—die in such a storm as this! It costs more to bury her than two of her are worth. But she's done with—she's made us a world of trouble, and this closes the account. There, boys, that'll do for aunt Dorothy. Now bring round the team. It's a mile home, and I don't see but we must make a new track, every foot of it. Nimble, now." And so they moved away, leaving there poor old aunt Dorothy *Brinsmade* in her winding-sheet, the deep, cold snow fast gathering on her grave.

## CHAPTER XX.

NORTHERN Human Chattels. Where is Aunt Dodge?

A MONTH now wore away. The grave had been again opened, but this time to receive all that was mortal of Mrs. Bunce, whom we mentioned as cut down by sickness soon after the conclusion of the arson examination. Boyce was tending the same way, and the constitution of Mrs. Boyce, as it was found, had received so great a shock by her shipwreck and subsequent trials, as to leave small hope that her life would not be the forfeiture. Every day Jims came in to inquire how they did, and his heart trembled for the little Alice, lest she also should become a pauper, after her parents had left the world.

The care of their little daughter greatly troubled both of her parents. It was true that she had many a friend and relative in England, but none nearer than uncles and aunts, and the difficulty of returning her there at so early an age seemed to them almost insurmountable. But if they did not, she would most positively be left in the hands of those strangers to whom they were themselves indebted for their present comforts; who could tell what misfortunes or the changes of life might compel them to do with her?

But those friends were tried friends, whose charities were not stimulated by the uprisings of a mere transient emotion of pity, or the desire of applause from the world. *They had in them the true convictions of duty, and they*

obeyed them. Conscience and reason spoke to them, and they listened. Religion shewed them her paths of benevolence and self-denial only to inspire them with a determination to walk in them at every sacrifice. They knew from the Gospel, and from their own experience, it was "more blessed to give than to receive."

Mrs. Rodman, Mrs. Haddock, and Mrs. Phillips now frequently held sessions together, in which they consulted for the good of the poor in general, and in which they made an arrangement for the little Alice in particular. It was the earnest desire of Mrs. Rodman that the child might be given into her care, and she would undertake to educate and provide for her in the future. To the two friends, Mrs. Haddock and Mrs. Phillips, this arrangement was entirely desirable. To Mr. and Mrs. Boyce it was melancholy pleasing, their hearts yearning over their dear one, and the wish yet living in their hearts that she should once more be permitted to see her native land.

And it was finally stipulated that when she was eighteen years of age, she should be allowed to make a visit to her relatives in England, and look after any legacies or property that might have in the meantime fallen to her there, provided she herself was anxious to go, and there were no insurmountable obstacles in the way.

And thus the orphaned one found a home and friends.

But who can tell us where the red-capped widow Dodge has gone? It is now February, and she has been away for a fortnight; no one knows where, no one seems to consider it of much importance. When Captain Bunce was asked what he thought of it, he replied that he thought very little of it, unless that she had got into some other poor-house, and the town there would

be sending him a bill soon for keeping her. As for looking after her, the Captain never thought of that. He said the paupers always came back as soon as he cared to see them.

And so she remains off a long time—probably doing well in some other habitation of God's poor!

But her place is somewhat missed by the widow Prescott, for she is a sensible old lady of piety, and the two have long been acquainted. Mrs. Dodge was raised in affluent circumstances. Her young life was one of almost unalloyed happiness. Her father and mother moved among the highly influential of the town, her two brothers and three handsome sisters were her unselfish admiration and constant companions, and they all moved in the first society of the place.

But a great change came over the family. Joanna married one of the young merchants of the town, and her prospects were bright and her heart was buoyant and happy for a time. At length the dark cloud began to gather round her, and she lived to follow to the grave every one of her father's house. And her husband became, as alas! too many have done in whom the hopes of wives, loving through all changes of life, have centered, confirmed in ways of intemperance, and saw the ruin of his fortune.

In this advanced life they were glad of the humble station of keepers of the turnpike gate, and when the death of her husband left Mrs. Dodge a widow, it was not long ere in her infirmity of body and mind she was forced to apply to the town for support.

And now she is "the widow Joanna Dodge, with the red cap." And she who was the "belle Joanna Martin" in her youth, and the excellent Mrs. Dodge in her middle life, sensible and chatty and benevolent—good



to all—even to the poor, may go and come as a town pauper any where, it makes but little difference where or when, provided she is no bill of expense to him who, for a stipulated sum, gives her her daily food and yearly raiment. Nobody feels in duty bound to carry her if lame, weary or sick, nobody to feed her if hungry, or clothe her if her garments are tattered and soiled. She is too poor to make one any return for his benevolence to her ; or to merit the attention of society, as the principle on which benevolence generally turns with them is this : to do good to those who can in some manner repay us the same again. The poor people have a very slim chance therefore, considered as so much per cent. of society under marketable valuation, or as so much to the loss and gain of community—they are despised, and turned from as of less value than good working, hearty servants, be the same white or black. The town paupers as such, are not regarded as eligible to office, as capable of any business or trust of importance above that of a child, or a half idiotic, sputtering dunce.\* In the old poor-houses they were, and now are, a cast-off portion of humanity, moaning in weakness, hunger, thirst, nakedness, filth, disease and moral contamination, too de-

\* From the following note, taken from the New York Sun, January 8, 1857, it would appear that a town pauper was once elected to a very important office.—  
AUTHOR.

“ It may be remarked here, that the attempts made by town authorities to get rid of the support of paupers are generally very pertinacious, and sometimes ludicrous. It is a fact, that, in one of the neighboring States, where there was but one pauper, he was elected a member of the Legislature, and actually took his seat ; and, it may be added, the fact of his being a pauper might not have been known, had not a bill been introduced to give the bodies of paupers to surgeons, which he understanding to mean while the said paupers were alive, was so agitated that his real character became known ; and the scene may be better imagined than described, when he made a solemn appeal to his constitutional rights, against such a monstrous law as the one proposed.”

graded, too loathsome often to awaken other than revolting reflections. Accordingly, following this fashion of the world, the church, and the individual Christian cast them off, and passed by on the other side. The "contributions for the poor" at the Lord's table, were not made for the poor *paupers*—they received them not, such monies were carried past them, to some sick or weak, though respectable poor brother or sister in some respectable family, or under what might still be his or her own roof. How little of it, *if any*, ever visited the poor-house !

Thus it was and is, that the principle on which it stands, of reducing the poor of the town to the condition so nearly of chattels, is wrong. Nobody will seek to relieve distress that is provided for by the public vote and law. The persons who bind themselves to feed and clothe and comfort the paupers, are expected to do this *in their own way*, especially as the bargain made is a tight one for the contracting parties, as all concede ! They are not to be interfered with by my ways and directions ! How can they carry out their plans securely if you and I, and others, may dictate to them, and undertake to do anything that will create among the subjects of pauperism a state of ingratitude—a complaining, jealous spirit ? Hence the paupers are often worse off than slaves. They are sold for the year to one who, if he cannot work them some, will be sure to make up his loss from their food, raiment, and shelter. And their position is the more degrading, that it is often a perfect contrast to their former life. Many a one has known the luxury of wealth ; many have been in large business, in offices of trust, in places of fashion and amusement ; others have traveled much abroad ; and *again, others have been great readers of books, and in-*

structor in science ; they have been advocates at the bar, and ministers at the altar. The changes of Fortune are many and wonderful. Look in at one of our prisons, and see who are the operatives there at the anvil, on the work-bench, at the loom, at stone cutting, at coopering, tailoring, and so forth. Are they not from every grade in human society ? And so is it with the poor. Misfortune, infirmity, disease, and old age, instead of statute crime, have made men paupers. Unfortunate, though often personally vicious in their ways, they have come to be imbecile and harmless, instead of strong for crime and cunning for evil. So they drop out of the leaf of the book of humanity, and are known no more. They may suffer, may be horribly, cruelly treated, may starve, sicken and die—die of fever, of cold, and hunger and nakedness ; but it makes little, if any difference to other men. The world is glad to let them go to their last home !

We speak of the poor-house that is made such by the hammer of the auctioneer. Paupers at the North, in public town-meeting of freemen, religious men, intelligent men, the husbands of delicate and refined lady-wives, the fathers of promising and gifted sons and daughters, men in business, men in office, men who read and think and pray, *do sell their own poor and infirm fellow-citizens*, BECAUSE THEY ARE POOR AND HELPLESS ! TO THE LOWEST BIDDER ! They sell them for so much a year—and repeat the sale at the end of the time for another year—growing no wiser, more thoughtful or merciful by the lapse of time, or the workings of the system. While *slaves* are sold, *even the aged and infirm*, to the highest bidder, as are cattle, horses, lands, goods, stocks—these, the paupers, being destitute of value and *having only souls*, not bodies fit for toil or pleasure, are *cast aside as* useless, mere excrements on the great body

of society, valuable only as they perish and so make room for others !

The work-houses, the colored homes, the orphan asylums, the lunatic asylums, the penitentiaries are places for the recovery of some and of hopeful labor in respect of most ; or else they are the charity of the public and of individuals to relieve such as have some claim on them for the exercise of benevolence, distinct from that of mere pauperism. The hospital is not the poor-house. The alms-house is, *in some sense*, the modern improvement of the poor-house—it is one form of improvement, and is peculiarly adapted to populous towns and cities. It is not always well conducted. But where this is not appropriate, there should be either a county farm, or town farm, with ample accommodations for healthful exercise, and opportunity for such and so much labor, as individual cases may require, with every degree of care to secure clean and well ventilated apartments for every person in the establishment, correct associations and familiarities ; securing to the aged women, and infirm or delicate, warm, pleasant rooms, with easy seats and carpets and curtains and lights, bibles and other books ; to the children proper care and instruction, and to all that proper food, which every one of us, gentle readers ! would, under similar circumstances, desire. If, under this kind and reasonable care, the lives of the paupers were lengthened out some five or ten years, and so the town might fear that an additional expense would arise from so keeping them, it must be replied that in all cases, or nearly so, where this system has been adopted, the paupers have work on the farm and premises *more than enough to support the institution*,\* and so the town

\* Article in *New York Tribune*, from James Brewster, Esq., of New Haven, Ct., Dec., 1856 -- *AUTH.*

has actually derived from it a surplus revenue. At the same time it should be to us a joyful consideration that the paupers are in this way brought up from a state of humiliation and degradation once more to the rank of comfortable citizenship—in effect no longer slaves, or worse than slaves, they are where the benevolence of Christianity can reach them—where society no longer casts on them her dark shadow of neglect.

But where is the widow Dodge? She comes not. Poor Henrietta sits a long hour with the widow Prescott, and wonders why Mrs. Dodge is not at home. Jims says she is better off somewhere. Mrs. Rice thinks she has found some old relation who has opened her doors to give her winter quarters, and Bill thinks she is old enough to take care of herself. Mrs. Prescott thinks it would be a pity if anything should happen to her in her old age, and as she looks on the cold snows of February, shakes her head, and says—"I fear I shall dream bad things of her."

"Now, Miss Prescott," said Mag Davis, "you're a believer in dreams, are you?"

"I believe in them! of course I do. Didn't the people of God in old times 'dream dreams'?"

"Perhaps they did," said Mag, "but dreams now-a-days seem to me of mighty little consequence."

"Don't all dreams come from the Lord?" inquired Mrs. Prescott.

"No, I don't believe they do. How should He have anything to do with making your dream a thing that never comes to pass, hey?"

"There ain't such dreams!" said Bill.

"There ain't *many* I guess," said Mrs. Prescott, a little bewildered.

"*They* are as thick as beef soup," said Mag.

"Well now, name one," said the old lady Rice.

"Oh, that's very easy," said Mag, "I dreamed the other night that all the paupers of Crampton were put into a grand house, with carpets on the floors, and curtains to the windows, and good changes of clothes furnished them, and as good a home as they ever had, and victuals and drink of the very best kind. Now that's an instance. Every one of you knows that the Lord never gave any body such a dream as that—so perfectly impossible a thing!"

"The Lord—no, indeed!" said Bill.

"Why not?" inquired Mrs. Prescott.

"Because it would be tantalizing his creatures, and tempting them, which the Lord never does."

"Well, now, it seems to me," said the widow, "just like this—that the Lord was so merciful to you and to us, that he was willing to show us in such a dream how unbounded was his power and his mercy; that he could even lift us up out of this pit of woe, as he did Jeremiah and Joseph, and as he recovered Daniel from the den of lions, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego from the fiery furnace. Now we must believe in him with strong faith—perhaps if we had faith he would do something for us as good as that dream, every bit of it, Mag."

Good old praying saint, she sees mercy in every dispensation, the outstretched arm of Israel's God in every cloud.

"Now, Mrs. Prescott," said Dan, "what's the use of talking after that sort? You know that Mag's dream is a regular devil's idea to worry people. There's no more hope of it's coming to pass than there is that Captain Bunce will live a hundred years."

"I have great faith," said she in reply, "in the Lord's promises; and does he not say, your sons and your daughters shall dream dreams?"

"Well, did that mean Mag Davis?" said Dan.

"Of course it did!" said Mag, with a shout and a laugh. "Well, now," continued she, "I had another dream—want to hear it, say?"

"Yes, tell it," said several.

Poor, ignorant, and oppressed creatures always love to tell and hear dreams; they are a superstitious class of persons. "Well," said Mag, "now get your ears wide open; this is a true dream, and scarey, too. One night, it was a dark, stormy night, the wind was very high, and the old trees swayed one way and another, groaning like the ghosts that sometimes come round here from the graves of our sort of folks—for you know they can't rest easy in their graves, don't you?"

"That's likely enough," said Cowles, who was rather easily frightened, having thought he had seen a ghost two or three times running through the orchard and dancing about among the trees—"I have no doubt they *do* rise."

"Nor I," said Mag, "not one jot nor grain."

"I hope there are none out to-night," said Dan, with some more concern than he usually exhibited.

"If there are any," said Jims, "they'll shake their teeth in your face, old Dan, I know."

"Why so?" growled he.

"Because they are going to have your body and soul as soon as they can make room for you," said the boy.

"Get you gone, boy, don't fury me—what's the use? Well, go on, Mag."

"The ghosts rise, every body knows that, when they're a mind to, and I say it was a good night to remind one of them that I speak of, a dark, stormy, windy, howling night, and I could see something moving about in the orchard that seemed to me half ghost, and half animal

with horns—all scaring me a good deal, so that I went and told aunt Dorothy, now dead and gone, though I think *her* ghost isn't far off."

"Pshaw!" exclaimed Dan.

"Well, she said it looked frightful, and we both trembled, till finally it slowly began to fade away, and by-and-bye totally disappeared behind the barn."

"The old white horse!" said Bill, "as true as I'm a live soul, ha! ha! ha!"

"How do you know what it was, nigur?" shouted the hag.

"Because I saw him, and led him away myself, Miss."

"You lie—it was a ghost," said Mag, in tones as sharp and mad as a hyena—"it was a ghost! I saw it and so did aunt Dorothy."

"I led the old horse away, I tell you, by the ear of his head, and took him round behind the barn, and so on into his stable. There was no ghost, miss, not a speegle was out that night—nor is there—very often, my word for it," said old Bill, with spirit.

But Mag was a hard one to put down, and was only pacified by Dan seizing her by the wrists and holding her as in a vice, while he thundered in her ears—"Be still, you hag, and tell your dream. Let the ghosts go to h—, where they came from. Give us the dream, I say—do you hear?"

"By and bye," said Mag, "we laid down and went into a hard sleep. But I kept dreaming all night, and once I dreamed that aunt Joanna Dodge was out a good way from home, plodding along in the snow with her red handkerchief on her head, weeping on account of her sorrows and the bad walking; when all at once a good-looking person dressed in misty white came along and *threw a white blanket over her and took her into his*



care. Then she got along well. By and bye I thought there was a great wedding and a mighty crowd of people present. But who do you think was the bride, hey?"

"Don't know!" said several.

"Can't you guess?" inquired she.

"No, unless it was aunt Joanna herself," said Mrs. Prescott.

"*And it was she!* It was old aunt Joanna herself, married and took to a steady home in her old age. Ha! ha! ha!" shouted the dreaming Mag.

The widow fairly hung her head down in her lap. She didn't know what to say.

"There! I knew it would puzzle you," said Mag.—"Isn't it 'odds and likely' that my dream of aunt Joanna will come to pass? ha! ha! ha!"

"Perhaps it will for all," said Mrs. Rice. "You know old folks sometimes get married."

"But they are not often paupers!" said the old crone.

"Well, I knew of one old cripple, Miss Hugglewill," said Mrs. Rice, "that the overseers of the poor in a town in —, hired another to marry, by giving him a hundred dollars—and they were actually married."

"Yes," said Mag, "and how long did they live together?"

"Don't know, nor care," said the other.

"Well, I know. They lived together just three weeks, and then petitioned for a separation, and the courts said there had been no legal marriage at all, ha! ha! ha!"\*

"Who knows," said aunt Prescott, looking up calmly upon them, "who knows," and she now looked serious and solemn, "who can tell, but this also was one of the Lord's dreams, to show us poor, sinful creatures, that

\* M —, Vermont.—AUTH. See Appendix, A.

aunt Joanna will be invited to and entertained at the marriage supper of the Lamb at the great white throne of God in heaven?"

And the frightened, and railing, and laughing group of wretched paupers, grew serious also, and still, and thoughtful, and more calm, and one by one they slunk away to their quarters for the night.

Jims rolled in the old blanket on the floor, snored and dreamed, and shrieked, for he seemed once to think three or four ghosts were chasing him through the branches of the apple trees, and Mag was one of them, spouting fiery arrows at him from her burning eyes and mouth, and threatening to shake him over the pit of fire. And then he dreamed that Captain Bunce kept him for a whole week in a dark, dungeon-like room, on a crust of bread and a little water, for stealing chickens.

Dan dreamed that he was in heaven, and awoke horribly exercised in mind lest it should, alas! for him, prove true. Little heart had he for *that* world. But the night wore away and the speegles retired to their graves. Ghosts never rise but in the night.

## CHAPTER XXI.

PAUPERS not their own masters or law-makers ; which appears very like a state of Involuntariness—were it not in New England !

It is not strange that neglected and poorly cared for, and despised as were the paupers, many of whom had seen better days, and still carried with them some remaining sparks of former character and life, they should develope in this condition the very worst features of vice, and justly incur the odium that rests on those who lead a vagrant, idle, wasteful life ? They could but know and feel their degradation. They were not sent to the poor-house as lunatics, nor as criminals against the laws. They were held in the condition occupied by them simply because they were poor and friendless—or because they could not supply themselves actual food and raiment enough to keep them alive. Society in a Christian land know that they must not starve by the way side, nor offend community by their nakedness. And the poor-house system grew out of this conviction and the necessity of the case. It was not a system of cheerful, sympathetic benevolence, but a system of coerced relief, in which the people at large submitted to a tax on their property at the smallest possible rate—it being understood that the paupers who received the aid should not be regarded as claimants on their property in any sense, and the tax should be a gratuity sufficient *only for the merest necessity*, and nothing beyond.

*Of course*, at the annual town meeting, the poor, these

white men, women and children (!) were, and in many a town in New England *it is still so*, put up at *public auction* and sold to be **THUS** supported for the term of one year, *to the lowest bidder*—to that person, who after carefully figuring all the cost, is of the opinion he can safely to himself take the risk! or the selectmen of the town make a contract with him in the name of the town.

So is it in good, wise and pious New England, the land of a brave and chivalrous ancestry, the land of the free, the land blessed with and affluent in schools, and colleges, and churches, whose praises live in the songs of ages!

But shame on New England, that she can thus sit calmly by the degradation of her poor—that she can forget the thousands of her own native children in these polluted poor-houses, half-starved, half-clad, half-sheltered, pampered stock for early graves, tottering souls but half informed, or remembering that a Saviour came into the world!

Is there a church of Christ in New England guilty of this blood? a priest who walks by on the other side this great poverty? Let both remember that it was of the poor in the hedges and by the highways, that the marriage was supplied with guests; that to the poor the Gospel was preached; that the Son of God came to seek and save the lost; that the impotent and feeble folk were the special objects of a Saviour's touch and recovering word; that the despised harlot was forgiven, and that Jesus went among the poor with charity's purest aim, with a benevolence that heaven smiled on, and that earth, awakening from her sloth and sin, should arise to imitate.

Not only are the paupers of New England poorly *supplied with food, raiment, and often shelter*, but from

them have been taken many civil rights and privileges incident to a state of freedom. We shall make this appear as we proceed. Suffice it to say in this place, that in some of the Free States those citizens who became chargeable, as paupers, to the towns or to the State, are disfranchised.\* They are not allowed to vote ; they do not serve on a jury ; they can not marry as they will ; if they have children, they cannot decide where or when they shall go to school or leave it, learn a trade, or go to any other service or business. Neither can they choose who shall keep themselves ; nor, except by entreaty, can they have any particular or special mode of life when at the poor-house, as to room, employment, food, or associates. Still they are not absolutely slaves,; for although they are paupers simply on the ground of destitution, they may recover themselves out of that state if property falls to them, or they may be taken out of it by individuals assuming their support. If, however, they have no property—and *as paupers* they can not hold property—and no friends arise to keep them, they remain on the hands of the town. Though independently rich to-day, if to-morrow poor, they are cast into the poor-house and disfranchised—in effect, disfranchised.

A majority of the people of Crampton thought the poor were well enough cared for. They viewed them as the off-shoots of society—as worn-out, intemperate, profane, blasted old hags and stragglers—suffering no one undeserved disability, social, civil, religious, or moral, and were really unaffected by the story of their sufferings and neglect. Such reports, if any reached them, they invariably attributed to fanaticism, or charged them to weak and credulous persons, who were never

\* Appendix B.

wanting in a community of even sensible men and women !

It was self-evident to another class, that the paupers never could be elevated. This was the strong argument of the Smiths, the Newcombes, the Shires. They said, with Squire Ben Stout, that they had got through with their usefulness, and hopes, and pleasures, as well as their sensitiveness to neglect and ill-fortune. Of course such a statement of the case, if defended, i. e., if capable of being maintained, would go far towards pacifying the voice of conscience, and fatally hinder all appeals to the benevolent.

They argued this from observation and nature.

This was so regarded, they said, by sensible people in all the States of the North. Every town acted on some such principle—and the facts in their own community, in the course of any ten years, went absolutely to show this.

So was it they argued in nature. Things would wear out. Brute creatures grow feeble, and sicken and die. Farms would run out, and the best of lands become worthless. Beautiful trees would wax old and die. Ships on the ocean rot and moulder away. Elegant houses and princely castles perish. "Even the rocks," said they, "decompose in the atmosphere and crumble to powder. The heavens and the earth themselves, the Scriptures assert, will wax old as doth a garment, and pass away !"

Having established the proposition, it was then easy to see the Christian charity or benevolence of the poor-house regulations. In fact, two-thirds of the people of Crampton regarded it as a fixed truth, that the paupers of that town were under heaven-high obligations to them *for paying the expenses of their pauper condition.* It

is so yet in many a good New England town—alas! that we must say it.

One good fact in the case sweeps away this cobweb argument, and one such even Crampton had—viz., in the case of poor Alanson Boyce. He was one of those inestimably indebted paupers that this argument would cover. But under the treatment of the poor-house he was at the point of death, half crazed and suffering. It was when the kind hand of true mercy was stretched out towards him, that he revived and sat up, clothed and in his right mind.

We shall yet see another instance, and may learn from it the feebleness and injustice of those views which men often bring forward to cover up their hypocrisy and selfishness, calling evil good, and good evil.

## CHAPTER XXII.

HAS Mr. Warren lost that box? He may fancy so. He may even search in vain for it. He may give the case into the hands of the Police, who are sure to find stolen property. But after all, *is the box lost?*

OLD Mr. Warren has outlived his wife some years, and a nephew of the aged man, with his wife, lives in the house and takes care of him. His property will fall to them on his demise. He is very old, very feeble, and cannot long hold body and soul together. The young may, the aged must die! But old Mr. Warren is a good man, and has long been preparing himself for the hour of his departure. It will not come on him with the surprise it does on many, though as in the case of all living men he trembles as he thinks how certain is that hour to arrive!

But there is one cause of anxiety on his mind, that as yet he has not revealed to any one! It frequently disturbs his quiet days and nights, and he sits now in a brown study over it, and anon walks the room and looks from the window. He is evidently recalling some past event of life, but is unwilling to communicate his reflections to those who are around him.

George Herring and his wife Eliza, are plain, simple folks, and while they notice the old man's disturbed feeling, they have no philosophy to account for it, only Mrs. Herring takes to grieving herself in the firm belief that she does not cook his food to his liking, nor furnish him with any degree of attention he needs for *his comfort*. She even goes alone into her room and



weeps over it, and studies how she may do better, and give the old man some relief from his disquietude. She and George both study over the matter, but George thinks Eliza has not failed in her duty, and that the old gentleman is displeased or pained at his management of the farm. So they both counsel each other, and resolve to leave undone nothing which will tend to old Mr. Warren's happiness.

Mr. Warren is annoyed at one circumstance. He has two or three times noticed Polly Tucker stealing round the house, and even detected her in peering into his room through the window, when she thought him out of it. Her wicked face, her gleaming eyes troubled him. What can she want? Both John and Polly now often come to the house and sit down; and they talk, and they offer to do little chores, and they are free to get round the house; and especially helpful to the old gentleman, offering him any assistance by night or day. What can they want? What are they after?

One day not long before, in an unguarded moment, Mr. Warren, like an old man in his dotage, informed the Tuckers that he had in his possession, in a silver tobacco-box, some important documents that Jims' own mother left for him before the boy became an orphan.

He had hardly made the admission before he repented it, for they both were highly excited, and said they should like to see the box; and they likewise declared that there must never any thing come to light that "Annie Sue" was not the boy's own mother. "Now mind that," said both John and Polly, "if you ever say any thing about it we'll burn your house down and you in it!"

The old man found himself, therefore, in a bad position, and this it was that troubled him. He still retained

the box and its contents, and the secret. He longed to surrender them all to a proper person, but rather hesitated to make them over to George and Eliza, or to say any thing about the legitimacy of the boy on account of the threatening of the reputed grandparents. He kept the box in his upper bureau drawer, near the foot of his bed, and it was carefully kept among some relics of small value that were once the property of his wife.

"What time, Miss Herring, does the old gentleman get his nap now-a-days?" inquired Polly one morning, as she happened in and lounged down in a kitchen chair by the fire.

"Oh, well, he gets his best nap between eleven and twelve. To be sure he sleeps in the afternoon, but not so regularly, you know; he always lies down, you know, at eleven, and he enjoys it, you know, mightily—and it rests him, too, more than any nap he has in the whole twenty-four I do verily believe."

"Possible!" exclaimed Polly.

"Yes; he says so himself, and that he couldn't get through the day without it. Old men, you know, are feeble bodied, and they seem to needs more sleep than most folks—don't you think they do, Polly?"

Polly said "Yes," but she evidently was thinking of something else. "I told John," said she, "I'd come over and help you this forenoon about your chores; you look so pale and sickly these days I feel almost concerned for you—so," said she, laying off her old hood, "you may put me to doing your work, if you will."

"Well, Polly, I don't feel very smart now-a-days, and it's clever in you to make the offer. It's considerable to make the fires in the old gentleman's room, and then run up stairs and down stairs so many times, you know, as *one must, and by night I do get terribly tired out and lame.*"

"Now just let me, Miss Herring, do a deal for you to-day. I'll even make the old gentleman's fires for him when he's asleep, and brush up the things, and you *shall* git a little rest."

A guarded, stealthy step! It is half-past eleven. The fire is made afresh in the old gentleman's room while he sleeps—a step as if taken by a cat towards the bureau in the room—the old man sleeps, and breathes gently; but any noise will arouse him. Another step, and a form crouches down to the very floor at the foot of the bed. A hand is laid on the knob of the lower drawer. With the least possible noise it is opened and searched, and half-breathlessly are those above it searched—even the upper drawer is now opened. With eyes distended and glaring the search goes on, and with hands that tremble, the lid of a small trunk in the drawer is raised. An exulting chuckle, scarcely as loud as a whisper, breaks open the lips of the guilty one, and a savage smile passes over her features as she plucks the silver box from its long safe depository, and conveys it to her bosom! More agitated than before, she closes up the bureau drawer, and the little noise so nearly awakens the sleeper that she crouches to the floor at the foot of the bed and scarcely breathes. Full five minutes she hugs the floor, till the long breathings of the old man reassure her, and she creeps up towards the door to escape. It opens with slight creaking, and she steps through into the kitchen, closing it carefully after her. And the old man sleeps on—and rests him well in undisturbed repose!

"Now, Miss Liza," said Polly, "I must run up home to see old John afore he gets off, and when you want me to help you I'll come again."

"I shall be very glad of your help when you are about here and feel like it," said Eliza. "You know it is a

great care that of old Mr. Warren, and you have helped me so much ; dear me, I feel like another creature. *I thank you, Polly !*" cried she, as the latter was making long and hasty strides towards her own cabin.

"Never mind it," exclaimed Polly, with her face towards home.

Exulting over her theft, she held up the purloined object to the astonished gaze of John, too drunken to fully realize all the importance of her adventure, but not totally lost to its meaning.

"Well done, Poll ! by the Lord Harry !" said he—"now that young brat may whistle for his mother—wonder if he'll find her ? ha ! ha !"

"I told you I'd have it, live or die !" shouted she.—I'd had it if 'twas necessary by cutting the throat of old Warren. Where's the whisky, John ?"

"Here it is—drink till you can't get down any more. You shall have all you want."

In their drunken spree, which lasted two days, they failed totally of finding the spring by which the box was opened, and at last Polly cast the box into the ashes, exclaiming, "Lie there, good-for-nothing old trinket !" Subsequently in poking for the treasure among the ashes, which fortunately were not hot, she rolled it out on the hearth rather violently, and before she could seize and hold it in her hand, it fell through the floor by one of its numerous apertures, and down under the walls of the house, not into the cellar apartment, nor any other part accessible but by removing the floor boards or the outside walls. And they could neither see nor reach it. Both were disconcerted by this, but they said it was safe there anyhow, and when they wanted it they would tear up the floor.

After old Mr. Warren had finished his morning sleep,

he felt unusually comfortable, and when Eliza called him to dinner, he expressed great thankfulness to her for all her care and kindness. He made a good dinner also, and was in extraordinary spirits. So Eliza was very much relieved and put on her best smiles, and talked and laughed with him a long, long time. And by and bye George came in, and he ate his dinner happily and heartily, and took great interest in the old man's cheerfulness. And the sun-light of comfort and joy once more broke in on the little family circle there—alas! how little cause for it. Could the old man have known what he had lost during that very sleep, what treasure had been pilfered from him, a gloom greater than ever would have marked his features, and sadness of a fearful kind settled on his heart. But he deems all safe, and it is therefore well with him.

## CHAPTER XXIII.

Hæ!

EARLY in the history of modern western emigration, Mr. and Mrs. McDougal removed from the east and located themselves on a farm in Western New York. They subsequently went out into Michigan, and there they raised a family of five sons and two daughters. The eldest daughter, who was a person of rather sedate mien, an intelligent, pious girl, beloved by many for her kindness of heart, and respected for her excellent judgment and good sense, in her twentieth year was married to a young clergyman of a neighboring town, and entered on the practical duties of a minister's wife among the people of his parish. These, in the infant settlements, the wide-spread parishes of the West, were numerous and self-denying. Both she and her husband lost their health in their employment, and were a long time enfeebled. Her mother, sister, and two of her brothers fell victims to the bilious fevers of the neighborhood, and they, at the direction of their friends, and especially of their physician, resolved on a journey to New England. Arrived there, they allowed themselves all needed recreation, and passed several weeks by the seashore, attending mainly to their health. They also went into the mountains and breathed the fresh air of those elevated northern regions, and soon perceived that they were rapidly recovering strength. In a comparatively short period, the husband began to preach

here and there, and passed at one time several months in a parish, performing the duties of a minister. And by and bye it happened that he received an invitation to settle in one of the goodly towns of New England, where the finger of Providence pointed him so unmistakably as to a field proper for his efforts, that both he and his wife agreed for the time to sacrifice the West, and make their abode at the East.

This clergyman and his wife were Mr. and Mrs. Rodman. They had now been five years at Crampton, and had become familiar with the people. But what was always a consideration of great interest to Mrs. Rodman, it was from this very town of Crampton her own mother removed in early life to the West when married to Mr. McDougal. Of course she had heard her speak of her eastern home, and of friends, many of whom were now no more. Mrs. Rodman had found very few relations of the family, even of distant connection, alive, although there were many persons in town who remembered her mother. It was a great pleasure to her to meet with any of the older citizens who could speak of her. She removed forty years before—Mrs. Rodman herself being now over thirty years of age. The Phillips and Haddocks were themselves too young to remember. Squire Ben Stout and his wife recollected her well, as they were now sixty years of age.

Once when they were conversing on this topic, Squire Ben told her that if old Mr. Warren, who lived back a mile from the village, retained his memory still unimpaired, he could give her, as he thought, many statements of the early life of her mother which would be interesting. "Moreover," said the Squire, "if I remember rightly there was a distant relationship between the *families by marriage*—I think so, somehow or other—I *have forgotten what, on my word.*"

Mrs. Rodman resolved that she would, as soon as convenient, make old Mr. Warren a visit, and so learn from him all she could in relation to her mother and the family. It happened, therefore, on a pleasant winter's day, that her husband proposing a sleigh-ride over the parish, she consented, and asked that it might be in the direction of Mr. Warren's retired house—"for," said she, "I have long thought I should like to see him and have some conversation about my mother and her family, especially the older members of it."

"Very well," said her husband, "let us go there," and away they drove.

Passing the bridge just below the large pond where Jims had caught his fish sometime previous to this, they were surprised to see the boy sitting below the dam, where the water fell from beneath the ice into a deep, dark hole, and intently watching his hook, with which it seemed the trout were sporting in the pool. He had on the same slouching hat, the same tattered clothing as when they last saw him, but his face and hands were washed clean and white, his hair fell long and handsome into his neck.

The clergyman reined up his horse, and cried out to him—"What luck to-day, my boy?"

At the sound of his voice, Jims turned quickly in the direction of it, and blushed slightly when he perceived Mr. and Mrs. Rodman looking down from the bridge and speaking to him. Withdrawing his line from the water and laying it down on the snow, he ran up quickly into the road, and with his hat in his hand made them a slight nod, saying that the water made such a noise he could not understand them. So Mr. Rodman again asked him what luck he had found in fishing. "Well, sir," said Jims, "*it is not a good day—the sun is out. I shall*



catch them near night, I hope, for poor Mr. Boyce's sake."

"Then you catch fish for him?" said Mrs. Rodman.

"Oh, yes, ma'am, every few days. He loves them."

"And you sometimes have a good taste of them yourself?" said Mr. Rodman.

"Not often, sir; I give them to him. He's a sick man."

"Well now, Jims, when are you coming up to our house; we want to see you and show you some books, and talk with you; come, won't you, before long?" inquired Mrs. Rodman.

"Yes, ma'am, if the Captain says 'yes.' I can't go if he refuse, you know. We are his folks. We ain't our own, by any means. I run away to go fishing, but I shouldn't like to, to go to your house."

"Why not?"

"Because he would be sure to find you and tell you such an awful story about me you'd never want to see me, nor I to see you again in the world."

"Oh, I hope not."

"I know him," said the boy, "may be he'll let me come, if so, I will."

"Do," said both, "come if you can; and now, Jims, is the road open, do you think, to Mr. Warren's?"

"I don't know, sir; there's sleds and cattle go up there, and old John and Polly go through that way—I guess you can get along."

"Well, we must go on, I believe; be a good boy, Jims."

"Good-bye!" said Mrs. Rodman.

"Good-bye, ma'am," said the boy, and then he looked after them as they drove on till they were lost to his view.

"There is something in the countenance of that boy," said Mrs. Rodman, "that instinctively fills me with interest. I wish we might know more about him, and be able to do him some service."

"He is, naturally, a very bright boy," said her husband. "It will be too late to do him any good soon."

"Well, husband, let us make inquiries about him, and see if something can't be done, eh?"

"Very good, we will."

They arrived at Mr. Warren's at length, although the road was none of the smoothest for an easy sleigh-ride, and were very cordially welcomed. The whole family considered it a very great mark of attention, that the minister and his wife should visit them when the roads were so poorly opened. They built the fires up anew, and brushed the hearth afresh, and put the room in good order all round. As for old Mr. Warren, he entertained his guests with many reminiscences of the parish, its former size in square miles, and the actual number of the inhabitants; the different clergymen who had been settled over it in sixty years; the history of many an ancient family; the changes in the state of society, in business, wealth, moral character, etc. He then inquired of Mr. and Mrs. Rodman about the West, whether, in their opinion, the West could not grow too fast for its own good, and in the rage for speculation and wealth agriculture come to be overlooked, to the great detriment of the inhabitants.

Mr. Rodman thought not. He said, "The West cannot fail to be cultivated, for no speculation in land, or in stocks, or staple productions can, in general, pay so rich a return as the garden soil of that mighty world! One good, able-bodied farmer, can there take care of and secure *twenty-five or thirty acres of corn!* While it is

impossible for one man here to cultivate more than two acres, or at most three, along with his other work. And the corn there is worth, on the ground, nearly what it is here—and the land is much cheaper. I think that the farmers of the West know where their true strength lies, and that if they speculate in lands and stocks they will not neglect to till the soil."

Mr. Warren said that those were sensible views, at any rate, and he hoped that, being so, they would be sensibly adhered to, and also, that religion and education would take good root in the soil with other things. "They are the two great important foundations of society, sir."

"Undoubtedly they are," replied the pastor.

"We have a large school fund in this State," said the old man. "It pays about one hundred and twenty thousand dollars a year, to be divided among the children of the State. But I think there is a fault somewhere in the distribution; the principle on which it is given out is defective."

"I fear it may be," said Mr. Rodman.

"Yes, it is so, I think. We should give to every town its proportion, but making it actually incumbent on the town to raise at least a dollar for every one the fund gives it. This would inspire zeal in the cause, (save those little peculations on the State by which some districts take the whole money due them on the scholar for the year, and putting it all together, hire teachers for as long a time only as it will pay—perhaps three, perhaps four or six months,) and insure *progress*. That is what we most need in *our* district schools."

"I confess to a similar opinion," said Mr. Rodman. "I do think there is far too little generosity in the support of common-school education in this State. We have

too much money, unless it is more wisely disbursed. We want advancement—'progress,' as you say, sir—in the common schools. Fresh books, higher standards, more emulation, better school-houses, the best of teachers, and terms of proper and consecutive length."

"Do we not, in all our large towns, need a high school as well as a graded grammar school, where Latin, French, German, Spanish, and so forth, may be thoroughly taught?" inquired Mrs. Rodman.

"I am of that *opinion*," said the old gentleman, "from what I hear and read. It seems that the country is filling up most rapidly with a foreign population, whose language *our children* at least ought to acquire."

"One is struck with this at the West," she replied.

"And in all the cities," said her husband.

"Yes, and even *here*," said Mr. Warren, "I frequently have a foreigner at my door for work, or offering my people goods, or entertaining us with music, of whose language I am as ignorant as though he were from the South Sea Islands."

"Yes, indeed!" said the pastor.

"I have thought," continued Mrs. Rodman, "that unless we introduce these studies fully and freely into our high schools, nothing can save us from incurring the charge of superficially educating our children."

"The English language will undoubtedly prevail over the world," said her husband; "but it will undergo changes, and form new phases in the actual and certain mingling of the different tongues. It will not stand alone, either. It will range and rank with others, and be the more potent if those who speak it also understand the various idioms and dialects of other peoples."

"I see no objection to the study of living languages," said Mr. Warren; "nor do I object to the ancient clas-

sics, although I never enjoyed the opportunity of acquiring them."

George, who came in during this discussion, ventured to say here—

"I am thinking that too much is said on these things now-a-days, and too much relied on education, any way. I go for good common-school teaching, such as arithmetic, geography, grammar, writing, and spelling. If you have these, with good bible-reading, the boys and girls will do pretty well, I guess, without Latin or Greek."

"But this seems to be a bright, smart age, Mr. Herring," said the pastor. "Our lads and girls who are in the schools seem, at a very early period, to develop uncommon powers of mind, and to yearn for advanced studies before the period when the law shuts them out of the schools."

"Ah! well, if they get their learning early," said George, "they can go to trades and on to farms earlier; that will be a gain, you know, to both masters and apprentices."

"Yes; but we want they should learn all they can," said Mr. Rodman.

"I don't care for that," he replied. "Give them plain English while they do learn, and good common sense, and the sooner they get it the better."

"But, then, consider how many foreigners there are here, and what wonderful facilities we enjoy for visiting other lands, and for trading with different nations—would it not be well to understand their language?"

"No; no great need of it, for you can always make use of signs to understand foreigners. And if you can't talk with them any way, they won't have so much temptation to come over here. I don't like foreigners myself. And as for trading with them, it's just taking the bread

and meat out of the mouths of the poor people here to put the value in silks and gewgaws on the backs of the rich, or to support the tyrannical governments of the old countries. All the gold of California isn't enough to pay these foreign silk bills, besides our produce. Now, for my part, I wish half the big stores in New York were shut, and half the vessels on the Atlantic were rotting at the wharves. What are they doing, all of them? What! Why, they are as busy as ten thousand hives of bees all the time, running us into debt, and ruining the country. Now, the smarter the boys and girls become—'*learned*,' as you call it—the more they'll do these very things; and I say I don't like too much schooling."

The company found George a go-ahead "Young American" of the old school. And as he hung tight to his peculiar opinions, the conversation passed on to other and to some personal matters. For instance, as Eliza smilingly prepared tea for her visitors, old Mr. Warren remarked—

"I must have known your mother, Mrs. Rodman. She was married to Mr. McDougal when she was young—I think about seventeen or eighteen years old—and soon after left us for the West, as New York and Eastern Ohio were then called. I remember her well by her family name."

"Do you, indeed, sir? I am rejoiced to hear it. I presume you can tell me many things about her early life? I should be most happy to hear *any* thing you can recollect of her, believe me."

"Well, it is forty years since she went from here. If living, she would now be nearly, or quite, sixty years of age. She has somewhat dimmed on my recollection; but let me say that I remember her as a romantic, fear-

less girl, rather fond of adventure, and good at contriving plays and amusements."

"*Well, she always was, to her very dying day*, Mr. Warren," said the pleased and excited Mrs. Rodman.

"True, very true!" echoed her husband.

"Ah! I remember hearing her say she was going out to get acquainted with the Western Indians, for she liked the Indian character, and wasn't a bit afraid of them."

"Just like her, for all the world! Was it not, husband?"

"Precisely."

"Then she said she would give more to see the great lakes, and sail across them, than two Atlantic Oceans."

"And then, husband, you know what a passion she always had for a sail in a schooner; and later, for a steamboat excursion on the lakes, Mr. Rodman?"

"I know it well," said he.

"She also said—I well remember it," said the old man—"if a person had any disposition to do good, the West was the place for it then, and would be for a thousand years to come."

"Dear soul!" exclaimed Mrs. Rodman—"she always had a Bible and a Testament, or other good book, large or small, to give to every one whom she thought needed it."

"And would frequently teach the children in the neighborhood to read," said Mr. Rodman.

"She was neat and tidy too in her dress and appearance," said the old gentleman, "very careful of trinkets and mementoes; an early riser, brisk and cheerful walker, and a great reader."

"Was she, indeed! Even when so young?"

"Yes, even then, and I remember she studied Latin, and recited it to our minister before she was thirteen.

And I should like to know if she retained her knowledge of it?" he inquired.

"To some extent," said Mrs. Rodman, "but not enough to be of much help to her children, whom, however, she had invariably attend to it. My mother, sir, neither wore out, lost, nor seemed to neglect any thing. If she had a ribbon on her hat that was not immediately wanted for further use, it was 'done up' carefully and put away in her box of 'collars,' 'wrist-bands,' 'muslins,' 'beads,' 'rings,' 'patterns,' and 'gloves.' She had boxes of trinkets all arranged with care, mementoes of her own early life, and of all the children. She always kept things in the most perfect system. She could in a moment find anything she wanted that was in the house. And she was neither parsimonious nor selfish, but was liberal, and always bestowing on others such things as they seemed to need. But there are always some things, you know, sir, that do not seem to get out of the house any way—and these she kept in perfect order, making every thing do double the work that we, many of us, seem capable of doing."

"You are a pretty good type though," said her husband.

"Thank you, husband. For example, my mother, sir, kept her striped silk wedding-dress more than thirty years, and I remember she would often bring it forward, and put it into some new form, and wear it about, looking in it as sweet and dear as you ever saw her, I dare say, in her best and loveliest youth."

"Very likely," said the old gentleman, highly gratified.

"Then she kept her wedding-shoes, and would frequently put in here and there a new stitch in the binding, and mend and wear them a few days, when she



would replace them carefully among the 'relics' to wear again some other day."

"She was one of the right sort of pioneer women, I doubt not," said Mr. Warren.

"And the family are now all gone from these parts?" said she.

"Yes."

"No near relatives in any of the towns about, are there?"

"None that I can now remember."

"There were no uncles and aunts?"

"There was one—an uncle ; but he and his wife died early, or in ten or twelve years after."

"Yes, I have heard my mother speak of them—and their children—had they any, Mr. Warren?"

The old gentleman seemed to waver on the point of memory here for a moment, and to look rather confused.

"Do not try to recollect, sir, if it is any trouble to you. Now, pray do not, sir—we have consumed a long time. Your tea, Mrs. Herring, has made us very talkative."

Eliza was glad if the tea was "agreeable."

"It is very, indeed," said Mrs. Rodman.

"Your uncle did leave one child, Mrs. Rodman—and she married young, and was unfortunate."

"Unfortunate?"

"Yes ; her husband was gay and wild, and dissipated, and at last, having been cast off by his father, who removed away, he left her and died afar off. She lost her children, her property, her home, her health and life. She came here in her last sickness—and here she died!"

"Is it so, indeed ; why, what an interest you have awakened in my mind about her and the family!"

"I am myself," said he, "a distant relation of the family, a great uncle on her mother's side!"

"Well, now, Mr. Warren, that is the most surprising of all."

"It is really quite a genealogical fact, Mrs. Rodman," said her husband.

"Truly so," said she.

The tea-sitting now broke up. Mr. Warren seemed weary. The fact was, he had exerted himself more than he usually did, but he had reached a point beyond which he felt that he could not safely go in his communications. He compelled himself, therefore, to silence on the matters of family history, and passed to other subjects while his visitors remained.

Before dark they were on their return.

Ere he slept that night the old man carefully opened the drawer of his bureau and took out the small, covered trunk and opened it, and looked among its various relics and curious things for the secret-box, the keeping of which began to trouble him. In vain he took away this and that object. It could not be seen! He will find it in another corner, under the shells. It is not there! He has overlooked it—but he fails to discern it even now! Surely it *is* there, and he again removes and displaces every one of the choice articles contained there; but he finds it not! It may have been carelessly left out in the drawer, or put elsewhere in the bureau. And he goes carefully on, and on, and on with the search—and the hour grows late for him, the old man, to burn his candle—so thought George, and so Eliza, as they saw its light beneath the door—and then they wondered what light work he pursued so long and steadily, for they heard the moving now and then of objects he displaced, and of drawers moved to and fro in his search. And then there was a long silence, yet the light burned on.

"I will go to him, I think," said George.

"*Do go,*" said Eliza.

And George tapped at his door—"Grandfather, are you abed and comfortable, eh?"

No answer, and then another gentle tap and question, but still all was silent. George opens the door a little way, and there stands the old man, wildly and painfully staring into the little trunk, out of which he has removed every one of its precious things, that he may be sure he has not made in his search an oversight.

"Grandfather!" exclaimed George.

"Why, grandfather," says Eliza, "*what is to pay!*"

The old man slowly and solemnly turned towards them and exclaimed—"THE SILVER BOX!—IT IS GONE!" and sunk into their arms. They laid him on his bed, and long it seemed to them that he would faint away and die. With camphor they revived him, and he sat up, leaning on the shoulder of George. Presently he was calmer, and he began to tell them distinctly what he had lost, when all at once he started from the bed, his hand pointing to the window, towards which his flashing eye was fixed, and exclaimed in a sharp, quick, angry voice, "HAG!"

George and Eliza, turning quickly to look in the direction, saw distinctly the vanishing face of the gipsie Poll, who had been gloating her ugly soul in the old man's anguish as she gazed on him from without.

"*To the devil with you!*" shouted George at her, as he quickly lifted the window, and saw her leap over the wall and vanish from sight and pursuit. "Infernal witch! What do you hang round here for?" But she was gone, the exultation of a fiend marking her countenance.



'Hag'



## CHAPTER XXIV.

WHAT happened to the Cabin. Remarks upon Cabins are useless, for they fulfil their day, never behind, never ahead of it. They are a standing Prophecy of Shelter and Refuge to Society. They show us, that if we cannot live in a Palace, we can in a Hut. Ho, the Cabin!

A WEEK'S carnival of drunkenness at Tuckers'. Noisy, boisterous company of wicked, lewd, and desperate creatures. Then there came a quiet of a few days, for the occupants were exhausted, their whisky gone, their food diminished, and they scattered themselves abroad for more.

This house of Tuckers' had often been complained of at town-meetings, and before the selectmen of the town, as a nuisance. The difficulty of keeping John and Polly long at the poor-house, and the necessity that they should have a place at intervals where they could retreat, induced the authorities to spare it. But the proprietors of real estate around it grew more and more resolved to have the house abated as a nuisance, or to pull it down, if by that means or any other they could force the old couple away. "We are losing," said they, "all our fences, all our wood, all our fruit in the orchards around, all the nuts on the trees, all the wild grapes, and so forth; and besides this, there is the general disgrace of such a house resting on the town." It was not long before a band of men was formed determined to raze the house to its foundation.

*Its occupants were gone when one stormy, dark, and*

gusty night, form after form passed silently along in the same beaten track, by a given point near the house of old Mr. Warren. All the inmates of that house had long before retired to rest. The house was dark, no light from any window gleaming forth into the darkness, and so the men passed by. There was one ear, however, awake. Eliza roused herself to hear what she fancied was an uncommon moaning in the winds, or the tread as that of elves o'er the roof well covered with the winter's snows.

It has been often remarked that in lonesome situations, sounds of passing footsteps are more plainly noticed by any who may dwell there, even though the tread may be light, and the noise much slighter than would awaken attention in more densely occupied quarters. And we think this is so. We think on this account it was that Eliza herself heard what no other living ear in that house that night did hear—the tramp, tramp, tramp of passing men—for she crept silently to the window casement, turned aside the corner of the curtain, and, in *robe de nuit*, gazed out into the dark midnight to note the passing, unwonted sounds. And if she saw aught she moved not, nor uttered any sound of alarm, even awakening no one that dreamed on and slept a faithful, honest sleep under her roof. \* \* \*

Was it that George himself had left the house that night, and in his movements disturbed her own slumbers, and was she peering forth into the darkness in quest of *his* form?

Silently the work goes on. It sways this way and that. Stout men, with their might, have hold with hooks and ropes of the main part of this desolate old home of sin and shame, the Tuckers' house. Now rises the wind, and it lifts hard with the strong men to over-

throw the hateful dark object crouching beneath the trees and the forest for protection, where the orgies of drunkenness have long had their most famous abode. The winds moan through the forests, and the gloom deepens as the work goes on. Dark nights become our deeds of lawlessness—when we lift our hands against another's right, how humble soever that may be. Silence, too, and labored breathings, told it as the work of violence done another, though perchance a foe or villain. But these were brave hearts and determined ones. They knew not a surer way, nor a better, than the one devised to "spot" a plague among them that had long been to many an intolerable nuisance. And at last, as they pull and weigh themselves against the posts and braces of the house, and the winds pour their full strength against the resisting walls, the heavy structure yields; these working men feel it yielding; they have it at an angle; it breaks, it sways here and crumbles there, and it falls and crashes, and breaks into a hopeless, disordered mass of ruins!

When the morning curtains were drawn up from the darkened rooms of night, and the sun arose, nothing of the former order of Tucker's house remained. The chimney had not fallen—the west wall was standing—the roof over that part of the building had crushed in and rested, one side, on the upper edge of this wall, the other side of it on the floor—and beneath this lay a mass of straw—and near it the fire-place, undisturbed. All else was changed. The house lay in ruins, broken up by the violence of its overthrow. And well was it, if the winds blew it down, (?) this structure, that no one had slept there when it fell!

And certain it is, no one ever lived to know, who did *not at the first know*, much, if any thing positive, about



this extraordinary overthrow. Even Eliza knew no more. She slept that night so soundly that she heard no noise ; she saw no one. Her husband was asleep beside her when she awoke ! No one seemed ever to have dreamed of any such event. Nobody could tell what somebody had to do with it. Everybody spoke of it as a thing done, but nobody appeared as a witness. Some persons thought to be very innocent (!) complained loudly that it was an outrage ; but the outrage had no clients. The universal sentiment was, that if the family had been present when the building fell they must have been crushed ; and the public relief at their escape went far to assuage the public grief at their loss !

In a day or two the winds and snows had filled up all the footsteps and paths around the premises, and as white as new fallen snow could make look a deed of darkness, so white and innocent looked this.

Returning in the twilight of the third day from their long forage abroad, and Mag Davis with them, John and Polly Tucker stood aghast over the ruins of the house. It made them almost sober to contemplate the sad condition in which those ruins now left them. They no longer had a home retreat, no house which they might call their own, no good shelter nearer than the poor-house where they might betake themselves and feel secure from storms of wind, and snow, and rain.

They were first sad, then as they regarded it the work of human hands, they gave way to anger—to violent, profane wrath. No, we cannot write the words they uttered, the wicked oaths they muttered, the revenge they promised.

Feeling carefully around the ruins, they discovered the shelving protection of the roof as it leaned up against the wall, and one after another they crept in and

rolled themselves up in the old untouched garments they had left there and in the vicious straw. Their well-filled whisky jug they took in with them. Full and heavy draughts from this relieved their half-sobered senses, and sent over them quickly the benumbing touch of a heavy and prolonged inebriacy. The three lay coiled together long after the sun arose in the morning, and no one of them left the rude shelter during the whole day.

At evening, Mag Davis made her way back to the poor-house, and John and Polly kindled a fire on the hearth, easily finding fuel in the ruins of their splintered dwelling. John soon fell asleep again from renewed potations of whisky, concealed in a smaller flask from Mag, (or she had not left them,) and Polly sat on the straw watching the fire and feeding it, as she quietly at the same time took from the loosening grasp of her husband the half emptied flask, and drank her married half! Was not she his wife?

## CHAPTER XXV.

## POLLY in the Ruins.

THE next day was the Sabbath. No one passed by the ruined house that day. And Monday came, but no one was astir there, and Tuesday morning, fresh and calm and beautiful, a mild, warm, melting day of early March arrived.

Mrs. Phillips wondered that Polly had not come, as she had promised ten days before, to help about her washing on Monday. The Phillips lived not half a mile from the Tuckers, on another and handsomer road, where there were large and fine dwellings and farms. They often crossed the fields to Tuckers if any thing was wanted, and on Tuesday morning, as Polly did not make her appearance, Mrs. Phillips sent over their hired man to bring her.

The faithful fellow stopped in perfect astonishment as he came up near the house to see the plight of things, and would have turned about without more ado, supposing, of course, no one was there, had he not, on coming a little nearer, heard something like a groan and a curse arising out of the ruins. Half afraid, he approached quite to the broken walls of the house, and called lustily—

“Halloa there ! John—an’ is it you, sure ?”

“No, you ——, it’s me and Pol. What the —— you want to groan so for, Pol—can’t you bear it, hey ?”

“No, I can’t, John Tucker—call him in, that’s Miss

Phillips' man," and Polly Tucker groaned heavily, so that Peter, who stood outside, heard her plainly and knew that there was trouble. At first he thought John had been beating, and had half killed her.

"Halloa there, Pete! Is it you?" said Tucker.

"An' sure it is, John Tucker. What'll ye be after having of me?"

"Come here, Pete! There, do you see. We're in a pig's house here, ha! ha! But Poll's got firedly scorched, and can't help herself, she says. How is 't, old woman, hey?"

"Pete, do you go home and tell Miss Phillips I'm half burnt up! Go, for the Lord's sake. Go."

"Don't be in a hurry about it," cried old Tucker, as he saw Peter start back from the entrance and hasten away.

\* \* \* \* \*

It is well that there are kind, truly benevolent hearts in this bad, this foul, this drunken world! That there are those to whom the wicked even flee in their times of wretchedness and misery, and on them call in earnest voices for relief.

Scarcely an hour has passed away, and a tender, delicate woman and one of her neighbors, accompanied to the ruins by their husbands, have crept in on their hands and knees, to find this groaning, blackened, suffering fellow-creature. The brutal husband, grown more sober, passes out into the light of day. But he can answer no questions, he knows nothing of what has happened save that "Poll is half burnt to death."

Mrs. Phillips and Mrs. Wilson, her neighbor, discovered as soon as they entered this loathsome covert, that Polly had been very badly burned about the arms, and chest and face. Her face was blackened by it to her

forehead ; her eye-brows burned off, her eyes were badly inflamed and swollen, and by the long neglect, for she was burnt that Saturday evening, when we left her by the fire she had kindled, the skin was peeling off and dripping from her arms and breast. She was in real agony, and besought them, if it lay in their power, to apply something that would allay the burning and painful sensation, that seemed ready to consume her every moment !

The ladies removed her soiled and half-consumed garments, but the crisp and blackened skin followed them. They applied oil, and cotton, and flour to the surface, binding up carefully the deepest wounds, and then put on her new and clean garments throughout. As it was impossible to remove her, they ordered over a soft feather bed ; they scraped out and brushed away all the old filth and straw, and made her as comfortable as the circumstances of the case allowed.

"Tell us, Polly, if you can," said Mrs. Phillips, "tell us all about it. How did it happen?"

"Oh—don't ask—me—I hardly remember, Miss Phillips. We came here and had a drinking time with our whisky—and I built a rousing fire—and—I recollect that John was swearing at me for taking his flask away—when I saw some of the straw a-fire—and soon my dress. So I called to him—and he—really—he couldn't get up. (Oh ! what a dreadful feeling burns *is* ! ) He cried out, 'D—the fire ! who cares ?'"

"Oh, dear !" exclaimed the ladies. "How dreadful it is, Polly ! It is a shame—a disgrace—a dreadful shame to you to live so ; and it is a wicked, outrageous sin against God !"

"Well, (oh, dear me ! ) I found he couldn't help me—so—I rolled over on the flames, and with the old rag of

a blanket, and a bit of carpet that were here, I succeeded in putting it out before it burnt us both to a crisp."

"Thank God you succeeded!" said they.

"Yes, indeed!" reiterated Mrs. Wilson.

"And thank also the villains who tore down the house over us and caused it!" said Polly, bitterly.

"Polly! Polly Tucker!" said Mrs. Phillips, solemnly. "You know better than to speak so, or to indulge those revengeful feelings. You know that you have lived here in a most unbecoming and sinful manner, against the wishes and entreaties of all the people, even of your own children—and in opposition, I fully believe, to your own conscience—and the people have borne it long, yes, very long; and I have been afraid you would finally suffer for it. Now, as you find you are suffering, rather accuse yourself than the people. Put the blame on your own determined and desperate career of intemperance and sin. Be thankful, Polly, that you are not now this moment in eternity—a fearful eternity, too, I fear, to you, had it been entered on from such a drunken brawl as you have just described to us."

Polly covered her face and wept. She was now perfectly sober; and what, with the pain of her burns and the convictions of her conscience, she was sadly broken up, and felt her woeful and humbled condition.

But we are not going to chronicle Polly Tucker as a converted saint because she wept. Polly had wept before. This, it is true, proved nothing against her present tears. But she did not profess to repent now. She only felt the truth smarting for a time on her conscience, and with mingled sense of shame and helplessness, tears were her natural relief. Her friends wept with her, and they besought her to repent earnestly and

forever, and to cast herself on the mercy of Jesus now, while she felt her own need of assistance.

But Polly said, as many a one before her has said,—  
“There is time enough yet to repent. When I am about to die and leave the world, I mean to!”

With perfect astonishment, the two ladies listened to this argument of the self-deceived victim of sin. “Time enough yet!” the destroying belief of thousands, though on the very brink of woe! How terribly this argument for further dilatoriness, and continuance in the ways of sin, addressed itself to the attention of her friends, mourning over the poor burned creature, bitterly moaning in her agony, and hardly removed herself the turning of a hand from death in the most awful shape! Ah! is there then “time enough yet?”

“But,” said Polly, “Miss Phillips and Miss Wilson, dreadful as you may deem it to lie here, yet here let me lie rather than in that awful, loathsome, hateful poor-house! It is chock full and running over with vermin. They’ve got the scurvy there; they’re cold, and starved, and forsaken. I had rather lie and suffer here, and die here, than go there.”

Both the ladies sighed over the truth of this description. It fell within their belief, if not actual knowledge, that the poor-houses of New England were any thing but cleanly and well-ordered refuges for the fallen and guilty ones who sought there shelter and relief. Here was a new argument for a reform in the system of pauperage support, as the same was practiced among them! Was it indeed true, that a hovel such as this was preferable to the poor-house! Were all the associations of that establishment necessarily not only mortifying, but absolutely hateful and revolting? It would seem to be so. The feeling in opposition to the life led there seemed

deep in the soul, as though it were one of the instincts of the human nature. They long remembered the impressions which that scene left on their hearts.

There was no other way but to leave her there that night. It was impossible to move her, nor was it the next day, nor the following—she was badly burned.

Captain Bunce was notified by the selectmen of the state of things at Tuckers, and directed to take them as soon as possible into his immediate care. Protesting that they would not go ; that they had rather die ; that they would never live there, they were on Saturday removed to the poor-house—again Mag, and Dan, and Jims, and Bill, and the widows all were fellow inmates of that institution.

After they were removed, the whole structure (chimney and every other part) was leveled with the ground. Mr. Phillips, in tearing up the floor, discovered a bright looking trinket among the rubbish, and getting down to it found a silver tobacco—snuff-box—and on the lid was engraved the name of “James Sherman!” Without examining, he carried it home and presented the curious object to his wife. She opened the box directly. Discovering the paper folded in it, she carefully withdrew, unfolded, and read what was written on it with a lady’s pen. Astonishment held her mute for a few moments. She then spread the document before her husband. Twice carefully did Mr. Phillips read over the paper. Then folding, he replaced it in the box, and gave it to his wife, saying, “Guard it, my dear, as carefully as life itself ; it is of inestimable value to the persons concerned.”



## CHAPTER XXVI.

## WHAT'S to be done ?

THE events of the last few days caused a very great excitement in the town. There was scarcely a family, or an individual, who did not hear and speak of them over and over again, as often as any chanced to meet. This continued for several days. Directly and indirectly the poor-house affairs came in for a large share of the talk ; and the selectmen were much blamed for allowing the Tuckers to roam about as they did, and for not insisting on more attention to the poor generally. Indeed, you would think, during the period of eight or nine days, that the whole town of Crampton was going to cast all its sins on the shoulders of the selectmen, and begin immediately a new and a better life.

So are the first impressions, when one peruses a well-written novel, a mere fiction of the imagination, designed to picture forth some human suffering to move the sympathies of the reader. But though the public feeling of Crampton soon subsided to its customary level, the minds of individuals were more than ever aroused and resolved.

" Well, now, Mrs. Stout," said Squire Ben, " this is a very unfortunate and—dreadful kind of business—isn't it ?"

" So it is, and I have just this minute said the same thing to sister Emeline. It is really quite a melancholy and disgraceful affair."

"Something ought to be done—that's certain—there ought to be done—something,—ought there not something to be done—Mrs. Stout?" inquired the Squire.

"So Emeline was telling me and Mrs. Shire, who dropped in yesterday evening. Said Emeline, 'One thing is true, something ought to be done.' And Mrs. Shire and I both exclaimed, 'there ought certainly something to be done!'"

"Question is—precisely, *what*?" said the Squire, looking between his legs, that were a little yawning and relaxed from the thighs to the feet, where the limbs again came together. The Squire was leaning his left elbow on his knee, and with his left hand was gently rubbing his eyebrows. His right hand grasped the top of another chair, and thus supported right and left, he was evidently studying out the path of duty.

"Precisely *what*," often gives men some perplexity. Squire Ben was relieved of one part of his quandary by the coming in of his confederate, Mr. Jonas Savage.

"Bad business this," said that gentleman.

"Terrible! terrible!" replied the Squire. "I was just saying so to Mrs. Stout."

"Well, I met her myself outside, and said the same thing," replied the second selectman.

"I believe it is the—very—general impression, Mr. Savage."

"Oh, it's as bad as murder, just about," said the other, "and so I told Haddock."

"Ah! and what said brother Haddock?"

"Oh! Haddock said it was all 'off the same piece,' and that it was the natural result of bad management."

"Ah! ha! And—what now—neighbor Savage, is your *real honest opinion* about it—yourself—yes, eh?"

"To be up and down about it," said Savage, "I think

the selectmen could be indicted by the Grand Jury for mismanagement and neglect of duty—and a smart thing grow out of it against us.”

The Squire mused over this a little, twisting his watch-key. At length he said—

“I—rather—think not—towns can’t be responsible for individual misfortunes, and especially when they usually attend to matters—about and about—as they ought!”

“So I reckon on,” replied Savage. “But Haddock and that gang have a *leetle the joke on us* now, haven’t they, Squire Ben?”

“A very ‘little’—not to say—any more than that, I grant.”

“Yes, confound the business, I just wish old Tucker and Poll had died twenty years ago, than to have had this happen,” said Savage, with considerable warmth of manner and feeling.

“Why, yes, said the other, “that would indeed have been—comparatively—a light misfortune to us—and just so to them. But then we can’t have things always just as we think best.”

“No, sir-ee,” replied Savage, “if we could, Squire, I’d go in for a regular reform in the town of Crampton.”

“So, so! Savage.”

“Yes, I would.”

“What would you do?”

“Do? I would go in for another cent tax on the grand list year in and year out, for an action at law before the courts against every one of these foreign State paupers. They make a deuced amount of fuss for us. Captain Bunce says he’s had more trouble growing out of folks sympathizing with Boyce, and—er—I don’t know who, than all the rest put together.”

"Well, what does the Captain say about Tucker's affair?"

"Oh, he says it will all blow over in a few days."

"And is that your notion?"

"Yes—that's my opinion. You see, Squire, the state of the case is just here—*It is done and can't be helped*. Poll is badly scorched—the house is torn up. The whole concern is in a new shape. It's bad—bad for them, bad for us, bad for Bunce. But the only cure is to *let her slide*. Things will come up right by and bye."

"Then you think we can't do any thing better than that, eh?"

"I don't see that we can. Time is the great settler, you know."

"Yes," the Squire knew that, and after musing a little, he came to feel of the same opinion with Savage, and to enjoy a good deal of relief.

So when Mr. Haddock happened in, all the gentlemen shook hands, and Squire Ben led off by saying—

"A bad, bad, *horrible* state of things, Mr. Haddock!"

"Quite so," replied he.

"Yes," said Savage. "As I told Haddock, not twenty minutes ago, up at Jones' store, and a dozen others in there, it's 'about as bad as murder.' You know I said that, Haddock?"

Mr. Haddock recollected the remark.

"Well, isn't it about half so at any rate, Haddock?"

Mr. Haddock (very coolly) didn't know what it was like. He had "never before seen such a case."

"And now, Mr. Haddock," said the Squire, "what is best to do about it?"

Mr. Haddock (very calmly) wasn't prepared to do any thing further about it at present. "We have them down at Captain Bunce's," said he, "and they are as

comfortable as possible in their case just at present. The town must pay the bills, I suppose."

"Well—yes—I reckon so, if they are light."

"Must mind that, though," said Savage.

"The folks over at Jones' *talk*," said Mr. Haddock, "as though they would like to have the town authorities prosecuted, and be willing to pay the bills, let them be ever so large."

"Mere talk!" said Esquire Ben. "I've seen such things before. Men don't like to pay such bills so well."

\* \* \* \* \*

Miss Emeline Flush ran to Mrs. Shire's, and the two hastened in to Mrs. Smith's, and the three departed with celerity to Mrs. Newcombe's, and these, the four, were met by four more, who all, with one breath, *began* to say the same thing, and then branched all off to saying several things of the same import. "*Did you EVER hear of such an HORRIBLE thing!*" "How could it have happened?" Was there any body to blame? Is she dead or alive? Does she know any thing? Is she drunk? Was she sober? Is old Tucker burnt also? When did they find her? Who found her? How did they find her? Dreadful! Horrible! Awful! Mysterious! Shows the uncertainty of life! Miserable couple! Filthy creatures! Drunken brutes! Worse than brutes! Shame and disgrace to us! Dreadful catastrophe! Unforeseen event! Calls for prayer! Ought to be improved! Trust it will be a warning to our young people! Awful dispensation! Unexpected! Dreadful! Touching! Painful!

And yet the speakers did not appear fully to realize what it was that wore so "dreadful" an aspect. True, Polly Tucker had been exposed to death in the way we have mentioned, and her case was a deplorable one ; but

the thing most dreadful and to be deplored, was the cruel and harsh regulations of the town in respect to its pauper and dependent population, in consequence of which, the Tuckers, wandering, vicious persons, were allowed their drunken orgies, and to celebrate them unmolested with all other persons, far and near, whom they might be able to persuade into them.

Old Mr. Warren, George, and Eliza said "it was a dreadful misfortune;" but they were not surprised at it—something of the kind they had long anticipated. In like manner the Phillips, Wilsons, and Haddocks had expected some awful calamity would befall them sooner or later. But the class of persons who scarcely ever thought of them, or saw them, were absolutely overwhelmed and astonished when the news came flying over the town.

The sympathy of the town for the sufferers, and its respect for the Providence, ran out about the usual length of such excitements, then wholly passed off; and the paupers of Crampton, Polly and John Tucker included, remained at Captain Isaac Bunce's.

## CHAPTER XXVII.

CAPTAIN BUNCE settles a score with Jims, and Jims with Bastardy and Pauperism. Remarkable Geniality discoverable in unpropitious circumstances, which is proof that Society is homogenous and vital. Flaws are exceptions to the rule. The Rule remains.

OLD Mr. Warren in a few days regained his usual strength and calmness, although there remained on him a perceptible grief at the loss of his precious trust. He now informed George and Eliza in confidence the whole of that secret which had so seriously weighed of late upon his mind. He also told them of the fear he had entertained that the Tuckers would put in practice their threatenings, and actually burn them up if he divulged the secret. What had become of the box he did not know ; but he said it contained the only documentary evidence in the world respecting the true parentage of Jims ; and he should of course suspect the Tuckers, if he could, for a single moment, imagine how they had obtained access to his drawers.

Quickened to activity by the remark, Eliza's memory recalled the morning when Polly came and so kindly offered her services to help off the morning work ; and that she was anxious to make the fire in Mr. Warren's room, and put it in order while he slept. And now she remembered the haste with which she left after she came from the room, although the work was not all done.

"I have no doubt she found it and took it," said she.

The old gentleman groaned assent.

"Farewell, then," said he, "to any help from that source. They will destroy the paper, and hide the box. They have it—there is hardly a doubt of it."

"I now see," said George, "why she has been hanging round the house evenings, peering in at the windows, and watching us—especially you, sir."

"Yes, I have no doubt she has been watching me when I have taken out the box, or any of my little curiosities or relics, to see where they were kept."

"Very likely—the miserable creature!" said Eliza.

"But they are pretty effectually broken up now," said George. "I hope they will find a steady home at the poor-house for the next twelve months."

"I do," said Mr. Warren. "And now that the papers are gone, I must do what I can by my own testimony to avert from Jims the lasting disgrace they would inflict upon him. I will go before a justice, and make my oath to the fact of the death of his mother here, and the circumstances of our giving away her child to Annie Sue."

They all came to think this would be highly important in the case; and it was agreed that, as the weather was mild, and no one could tell what a change might spring up in any half day of the month of March—windy and stormy March—they would go that very day, after an early dinner.

\* \* \* \* \*

"Jims, did you and Roxy and Dan steal one of my red roosters last night, you young villain, hey?"

This was Captain Bunce, with his hand fiercely and ruffianly hold of the youngster's collar. Jims hung his head and trembled as only the guilty tremble.

"Why don't you speak!" thundered the Captain.

"I haven't ate your rooster."

"No, but didn't you steal him, and Dan cut off his head, and Roxy pick off his feathers, say?"



"Well," said Jims, "old Bill and aunt Prescott's got the scurvy eating your c——d salt beef, and—what shall we do?"

"I'll teach you, you scamp ; and it isn't the first time either, is it, you've felt the rod, hey?"

"No!" said the boy, looking up with an imploring look into his face. But the Captain seized hold of a maple rod within his reach, and as few fathers ever do, he chastised the young thief, who cringed and cried with pain, and promised by all in heaven, earth and hell he would never do so any more, "no, not if I starve to death."

"Starve! you young reptile—who's starving you?"

"Nobody, nobody!" said the young liar.

"Oh, Dan! Dan!" cried Roxy, "do go out and stop him—the old rascal's hiding Jims to death."

Dan, who was complicated in this transaction, raised himself slowly up from a half sleeping state on the floor of the old musty mansion, and hearing the outcry, went outside. He looked on for a little time, and waxing indignant, although not personally Jims' friend, he cried out, "Halloa there, Captain, what's to pay!"

The Captain deigned no answer. It is not in human nature to stand calmly by and see a fellow-creature, who is even guilty, intolerably abused ; and Dan, who instinctively comprehended the cause of the punishment, and his own exposure to the Captain's ill will, approached with such a threatening demonstration of his two gigantic fists that the Captain, casting the boy headlong from him, turned himself fiercely on his new assailant, and commanding him to go about his business, dealt him over the shoulders a fierce cut with the same, though now broken rod. But this was the signal of his own overthrow. Dan, who was uncommonly sober, and who when

sober was yet a stout man, rushed on him with a terrible blow—one that if leveled on the head of Alanson Boyce had almost consigned him to perpetual silence. The Captain, now unsupported by Dick, had no chance of escaping it. He sunk to his knees under the blow, and fairly rolled to the ground. Dan, who of all other men in the establishment was the least humane and merciful, fell upon him, and would have beaten him terribly in this condition, had not Jims and Roxy grappled him and pulled him away.

The Captain soon got again on his feet, and shaking his fists at them as they retired, swore that he would yet pay them soundly for it, if it cost him his life!

Jims was severely flogged. He had never before received so terrible a punishment. Smarting with the pain, he ran into the house and cried piteously. He tore off his coat, and unrolling his shirt at the neck and from his arms, he bathed himself in water, and sought help from every one of the inmates, who gathered around him and tried to comfort him. Mag took him up in her lap, big boy as he was, and held him while Mrs. Rice got off his stockings, and they bathed his limbs. Dan brought in a great handful of snow and held it on his neck and shoulders, Tucker brought an oiled rag, taken off from his wife's burns, and put it on his chest, and the widow Prescott sent word to him to lift up his heart to God!

By-and-bye, as he became easier, they laid him on the bed by the side of Bill, who, as well as Ebenezer Cowles, was down with the scurvy, consequent on steadily feeding for a long time on the Captain's "prime beef," and in the course of one or two hours he fell asleep.

"Yesterday morning," said Mrs. Rodman to her husband, *who had returned home from an ordination in a*

neighboring town, "yesterday morning, I had a call from our queer young friend Jims."

"Indeed," said he. "Well, what said Jims?"

"Oh! he became quite sociable, and as usual got off some smart things."

"I presume so."

"Yes, indeed. He said Captain Bunce wasn't afraid of any thing but 'lightning and ghosts;' and they had 'lately frightened him most out of his seven senses, by telling him Joe Harnden's ghost was walking about the orchard with a dagger all covered with blood in his hand!"

"Frightful! frightful! wife. What shall be done? What a place that poor-house is—especially for this boy to be educated in. What can be done about it and about him?"

"I don't know as you have thought of the thing any further, but I have seriously reflected on that hint of yours, that we should take him. He isn't a bad boy. He is a very smart lad, and may be taught aright even yet."

"Oh, yes, I think so. But it would require much attention and time."

"True, it would—perhaps more than we could well devote to him."

"I don't know," said the pastor, thoughtfully.

"He might be of much help to you about the horse and cow. He could do nearly all your chores, and make the paths in winter. I think we might find him enough to do when out of school, to keep him from idle habits, and it certainly would be a relief to you."

"I think it might—I really think it would," said he.

"Suppose then," said she, "we ride down to Mr. Haddock's this afternoon and talk with them about it."

"This afternoon, eh?"

"Yes, if you are able to spend the time, and do not feel too much wearied."

"This afternoon—let's see—Thursday—to-morrow's Friday—then Saturday. *Thursday*? Well, so be it, wife, we'll go."

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Mr. and Mrs. Haddock had made arrangements to spend the afternoon of Thursday at Judge Fuller's in the next town, a drive of about eight miles. Mrs. Fuller was Mrs. Haddock's sister, a very estimable and intelligent lady. They were just on the point of starting from home, when Judge Fuller's sleigh, containing himself, wife and daughter, drove up to their own door. They came for a ride and a call, "and," said Mrs. Fuller, "we came for a bit of your cold chicken which we *know* you had for dinner, and for one of your handsome daughters to take this other seat in the sleigh, when we return to-morrow. She must, she must, she shall now go back with us and stay a week, and then you all come over for her, and we'll have a *time*, eh?"

"Do, aunt Haddock, do, *do* say yes, will you?"

"Why, of course she will!" said the Judge. "How can she do otherwise?"

In fact it was not possible; and as the Judge was going to see a brother lawyer a few miles off, the Haddocks' ride for that day was postponed. The Fullers left before three o'clock, and then arrived the Phillips.

How singularly things do happen in this world! The Haddocks were going from home on this Thursday, and were just about driving off when the very persons they were intending to visit came to see them, and they were prevented from leaving.

At the same time several persons, without any con-

cert with one another, had made plans to call on the Haddocks, on more than usually interesting business. It would have been a disappointment to all parties had they not met—and how nearly they failed of it!

"Yes," said Mr. Phillips, "this afternoon, if you please."

"Be it so," said his wife; "early?"

"Why, not so very—say by two or three o'clock."

"You would like to be home before dark?"

"If possible—oh, yes."

"It is a singular affair."

"Very."

"Do you think any thing can be brought to light?"

"Yes, I do; don't you?"

"Somehow or other I fancy so."

"Why shouldn't there be? here's evidence."

"Yes, as far as it goes."

"It is almost demonstration."

"What does it need to make it so?" she inquired.

"To prove it is her writing."

"And that the *boy is Jims*?"

"Very true. Well, well, we will go to Haddock's."

"You say early after dinner?"

"Put it at two o'clock," said he.

At three o'clock the Phillips came up to the door of Mr. Haddock, and were gladly received. The excitement of Mr. and Mrs. Haddock was very great when the box and its contents were shown them, and the manner of finding came to be explained.

"I remember perfectly well," said Mr. Haddock, "there was a belief in the community, years ago, that Jims wasn't Annie Sue's child. There was a report that Julia Sherman's baby did not die, and that it was given to 'Annie Sue' to nurse. But then the people

took no very great interest in the affair ; and without investigation—for what real difference would it have made so far as the pauperage was concerned ?—what real difference will it make even now ?—it was suffered to die away.”

They were talking on the subject, when who should drive up but old Mr. Warren, accompanied by Mr. and Mrs. Herring. And before the party were well through their greetings in came Mr. and Mrs. Rodman !

“ I declare !” said Mrs. Haddock, “ this must be a surprise party. Did you not pass others—come now, don’t say you did not—I shall hardly believe you if you do !”

“ Yes, we saw one sleigh load,” said Mr. Rodman.

“ Why, husband !”

“ I thought it quite likely, sir. Will it arrive soon ?”

“ Mrs. Haddock, it was Judge Fuller’s sleigh, you know, going in the other direction,” said Mrs. Rodman.

“ Oh, ho ! Well, I understand you. It is the same thing, though ; for they, you know, preceded you.”

“ Yes, so they told us,” replied Mr. Rodman.

“ Well, is it not singular we should all meet here this afternoon ?” he continued. “ It does almost look like a concerted movement.”

“ So it does, sir,” replied the aged Mr. Warren, “ especially as I, who seldom leave home on any occasion, am of the party.”

“ Whether it be concerted or purely accidental,” said Mrs. Haddock, “ it is most pleasing to us.”

“ We were going out ourselves—over to Judge Fuller’s,” said her husband ; “ but they came up here, just as we were leaving, and rode away only a few moments since.”

*The conversation was continued in this way for a*

time, and at length all parties began to feel a little restraint, as each one had come on rather private and special business, though, as it finally appeared, on substantially the same.

The allusions that were made to the Tuckers—to their past and present condition—brought the different parties so nearly to the point of interest in each mind present, that directly Mr. Warren said he had lately been reflecting on a subject which was of deep interest to him, and on which he thought his advanced age, and the whole nature of the case, made it highly important he should disclose his feelings, and that, indeed, in order to state the case to them, he had made the ride that afternoon.

"We are all friends," said Mr. Haddock, "if your communication is one that you can make to all of us, be pleased to speak—if not—if you would see the pastor, or any one of us——"

"Oh! no, sir—I think; George and Eliza, there is nothing I need withhold from those who are present."

"Just as you think best," said they.

"Twelve years ago," said he, "and it was more, I think—certainly twelve years ago, a distant relative of mine came to me in circumstances of personal distress. She had passed through much family sorrow and change. Her father, and mother, and aunt were dead. Her husband had become a ruined man and left her, going far off to sea, where he soon perished, and she came to my house to die. You know to whom I refer, most of you?"

"Mrs. Sherman?"

"Yes, Mrs. Julia Sherman. Before she died, she gave birth to her third child, under my roof, and as we reside remote from the village, few knew of it. At about the same time, 'Annie Sue' lost a child a week old, and after

Mrs. Sherman died, my wife and I gave her our little one to nurse, and he grew up under her care as her child."

The whole company betrayed the utmost sensation, although to most of them this was but a quickening of their memories of a certain portion of the history.

"But before Mrs. Sherman, my grand-niece, expired, she left in our care a paper, containing a note of the boy's parentage, and signed it with her own hand——"

Mr. and Mrs. Phillips could hardly restrain their impatience, and did not attempt to check their absorbed attention.

"She folded the paper carefully, and calling for a small silver tobacco-box, with her husband's name on it, she pressed in the paper, and closing the box, gave it to us to preserve."

The Phillips and Haddocks were more than ever interested.

"I kept the box after my wife deceased, among some little mementoes of her, in an upper drawer of my bureau, in a small trunk, occasionally opening it to see if it was untouched—for the Tuckers gave me—these same wretched people—gave me much annoyance, and have threatened to burn us down, if I ever revealed to any body the fact that 'Annie Sue,' their daughter, was not the true mother of the child. Of late, Polly has been very much about our house, prying in at doors and windows, and offering her services. Not long since she came one morning, and, as Eliza was very busy, she gladly accepted of her help. *She made my fire, also, when I was asleep,* and brushed up the room a little, and we have no recollection of seeing the box from that day to this. *It is gone!*

Hardly had he finished, when Mr. and Mrs. Phillips



sprang from their seats, and Mrs. Phillips reaching out the box, exclaimed—

" *We have it !* We have found it again ! See ! see ! Here, is not this the same—the identical box ?"

Mr. Warren was almost as much unnerved at the sight of his regained treasure, as he had been at discovering its loss. Both George and Eliza also were almost wild with joy.

" But," said Mr. Warren, " is not the paper missing ?"

" No ! it is all there, every thing appears safe, and as you have described it."

" In the name of truth and of God, my friends," said the old gentleman, " how did you come by it ?"

Mr. Phillips answered, " After the Tuckers were removed to the poor-house, we tore down what remained of the old structure, and under the floor, near the hearth, whence I conclude it must have escaped from them through the holes in the floor-boards, I discovered it among the stones and rubbish, and took it home to my wife."

" For which God be thanked," said the old man. " It is He who bringeth to naught the devices of the wicked. I came here to make oath before Mr. Haddock, who is a Justice of the Peace, to the statements you have heard. I am now ready to do so, if thought best in regard to the box and paper contained in it."

" I think it would be as well," said Mr. Haddock.

" By all means," said Mr. Rodman.

" It would be proper," said Mr. Phillips.

Mr. Rodman and his wife began to be much interested in this account, although as old Mr. Warren had not, in his previous interview with them, mentioned the name of Jims' father, they did not feel all the interest in it *they subsequently* came to do.

"Before we take this step," said Mr. Haddock, "let us see the document itself."

"To be sure," said Mr. Warren, handing the box to Mr. Haddock, who opened it and withdrew the paper.

"Will you read it, sir?"

"No, sir, I think you may as well read it yourself," said Mr. Warren.

And so Mr. Haddock read as follows :

"Call my baby JAMES, after his father. This is the dying request of his mother ; and let him know he had a true and kind father, and a mother who loved him to the last. Crampton, January 15, 183-. JULIA CARLILE SHERMAN."

"My God!" exclaimed Mrs. Rodman, and bursting into a flood of tears, was borne by her husband to a sofa almost insensible, and quite incapable for some time of further utterance than that of grief. The whole company were astonished and overwhelmed. Mr. Haddock ran for camphor, and the ladies fanned her. Mr. Rodman was too much occupied to explain, and all were in doubt about the cause of her emotion, except, perhaps, old Mr. Warren, when she regained her composure sufficiently to sit up and lean upon her husband. Presently she said :

"Ladies, that poor, neglected child, is the son of my own cousin, Julia Carlile! I knew," she continued, "there was something uncommonly interesting to me in the boy—and we came here this day to offer to take him from the town and educate him."

"Now of course we shall do that, my dear!" said her husband, with a smile of true and earnest sympathy.

Mrs. Rodman repaid this expression of her husband's interest and divination of her thoughts by a kind *pressure of his hand*.

"Thank you," said she, "I knew you would feel and say so."

"Oh, yes!" said all as with one breath. "And now Jims will have a home!"

The whole company now passed an hour in the most rapid conversation on the subject, and only broke off when it was concluded best for Mr. Haddock, Mr. Rodman, and Mr. Phillips to ride over to the poor-house and make arrangements with Captain Bunce for the removal of the boy.

\* \* \* \* \*

"But what is this!" said the astonished and excited Mr. Haddock, "and what does this mean?" said Mr. Phillips and Mr. Rodman, as they approached the bed of Jims and saw the red lines on his arms and shoulders, received by the boy at the hands of Captain Bunce.

"It's only a flogging the boy's had," shrieked Mag Davies.

"Only a flogging!" said Mr. Haddock.

"That's all! and that's enough, ain't it?" she cried.

"How is this, Jims?" inquired Mr. Haddock.

"Oh! it's nothing, sir," said the boy, "I'm better now. The Captain got rather high against us for stealing one of his roosters last night, and though we got it for the scurvy folks here, Bill and Cowles and widow Prescott, he took the pay out of my hide—but I don't care, it's all about well now," and the boy jumped to his feet and walked about as usual.

"But," said Mr. Haddock, "this won't do, Jims; it's not right to beat you so."

"No," said Jims, "nor to steal his chickens, ha! ha!"

"Well, I guess Dan give it to him," cried Mag.

"Give it' to who, pray?" he asked.

"The old Captain, ah! ah! Dan knocked him over

with his fist, ha! ha! ha! head and heels, didn't he, Rox?"

"Ha! ha! ha!" shouted Roxy. "Yes, he did."

"Didn't hurt the old c——," grumbled that worthy from a corner. "Do him some good I hope though."

"Where is the Captain?" inquired Mr. Haddock.

"Gone to bed drunk, I'll bet a thousand dollars," said Mag.

"Yes," said old Tucker. "He'll not show himself again to-day."

This was a painful interview to all, and it was especially so to Mr. Rodman. Sad was it to contemplate the life the child had led there to this its culminating point! Sad to know that in the neglected state into which he had been cast, he had acquired habits that might never cease their ravages upon his moral being; sad to see him marked and dishonored thus with the rod of a tyrant, and distressing to bear him in this condition into the presence of his newly-found relatives and friends.

Mr. Haddock succeeded in finding Captain Bunce, but not in a condition to be reasoned with, and he left him saying, they would take away the boy and the town would be released from his further support.

"Take him if you like—take him! take him, I say! Do you hear me? Take him!—oh, yes, take him—and—welcome—take him!" Mr. Haddock shut the door and left his presence.

"JAMES," said Mr. Haddock, "come with me,—can you walk?"

"Oh, yes," said the boy.

"Come with us. Good night, folks."

"Good night, sir. Thank ye," said Mag.

"Jims," said Mr. Haddock.

"What, sir?" inquired the boy.

"We have found you a new home."

"Sir?"

"We think of taking you away from the poor-house."

"Sir?"

"We wonder if you wouldn't like to live in a better place?"

"I don't know, sir."

"Suppose Boyce would like to go back there?"

"Sooner go to the grave!" said he.

"Well, would you like to get away ——?"

"For good and all?"

"Yes, for good and all."

"You know that, sir."

"We are going to take you away from him."

"From the Captain?" The boy stopped for a moment as if rivetted to the earth.

"Yes."

"Will you go and live with me and Mrs. Rodman, my boy?" now interposed the clergyman.

Jims trembled and leaned his hand on Mr. Haddock.

"We have thought of it for some time, James," said he, "and to-day have all made up our minds, if you are willing, that you shall be our boy and live with us. So just tell us if you are willing?"

'If I could be of any use to you, or not be in the way, I should like it *dreadfully*," said the boy through his tears, hardly daring to believe himself awake. But as they went on and drew nigh the house, and then went in, and the ladies and the children, and old Mr. Warren and George and Eliza gathered round him and shook hands with him and comforted him, while they also could hardly refrain from weeping at the wretched plight he was in, he began to feel that he was not only

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"Yes, if you are able to spend the time, and do not feel too much wearied."

"This afternoon—let's see—Thursday—to-morrow's Friday—then Saturday. *Thursday*? Well, so be it, wife, we'll go."

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"Why, of course she will!" said the Judge. "How can she do otherwise?"

In fact it was not possible; and as the Judge was going to see a brother lawyer a few miles off, the Haddocks' ride for that day was postponed. The Fullers left before three o'clock, and then arrived the Phillips.

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## CHAPTER XXVIII.

"We should of course miss a Pauper, Mr. Savage, of course!" It is quite a Mathematical certainty that two and two are four; and that if one be taken from four, there are left but three. Now, as Pure Mathematics is a dead certainty, we have no difficulty with it until we yoke to it our Moral Certainties. Then we may say, "*Of course, Mr. Savage!*" But there's a lingering doubt—an absence of Demonstration, after all.

THE announcement of these things went with great rapidity over the town of Crampton, causing no small amount of excitement every where. There was generally much joy at Jims' good fortune; surprise at the romance of his history, and Mrs. Rodman's relationship; consternation among some who apprehended it an entering wedge to impose on the town a new poor-house system; and in the mind of Captain Bunce the fear of a legal investigation, and a fine for his barbarity.

But Mrs. Polly Tucker was enraged. She became frantic and wild under the excitement, and tore the bandages from her wounded person. She cursed and swore, calling old Mr. Warren "a great, good-for-nothing old hypocrite, fit only for the stake." She "would like an opportunity to burn him up," and believed she should yet find one.

In fact, Polly could not be pacified. The injury done to the memory of her daughter was of such a flagrant description, she could see no relief from it—no excuse, therefore, would palliate it. She stormed about, cast all her medicines into the fire, refused food, heaped

maledictions on everybody, and became a perfect fury. A fever, that left no doubt on the minds of any how it would terminate, now seized her; and in a few days, unlamented, poor Polly's remains went to the grave in one of the poor-house coffins.

The attention of Captain Bunce was now particularly called to his scurvy patients. They had taken the disorder under the generous and plethoric treatment of the Captain, ever since the purchase of Savage's "prime" beef. It proved too much of a good thing—the last feather that killed the camel. Requiring an entirely new change in diet to restore them and keep them well, the Captain traded away three barrels of the beef, and got in exchange a lot of rusty number three and four mackerel, and some damaged feet and heads of pork, and accused Savage of selling him bad meat! But Mr. Savage knew better than that; the meat was all he recommended it; he only sold it for cheap meat, good enough for the paupers; and any fool might know better than to feed it out every day for two months, even to them. The Captain had the worst of the argument, as well as the worst lot of "prime" beef in town. Moreover, as he apprehended, the article actually fell in value, so that he lost two dollars a hundred on what he traded off. In many respects, the trade with Mr. Savage resulted badly for Captain Bunce.

The snows began to dissolve away towards the last of March and in the first days of April. Many a bank, and even many a pyramid of the flaky substance melted down. It was observed, in an adjoining town, that as the snow settled away on the south side of a long piece of woods near the road, the birds of winter, the crows, and hawks gathered there, cawing and screaming, and *diving down towards the earth furiously, and then again*



sailing away into the atmosphere, fluttered for a while, and then made another sudden and angry descent ; or, perched on the topmost branch of an old hemlock tree, peered down into the shade as if to notice some object not entirely concealed from view. And also the dogs in the neighborhood, or that passed by, ran from the woods, howling and moaning, and in the night barked a hideous barking, that kept awake their owners, and led them to speak of it the next day.

Slowly in the shade of hemlocks, and in the dense growth of branches and alders—slowly settles down and melts away the winter's snow. But warmer suns, longer days, gentle rains prevail ; the snow dissolves away even there, and presently there is an end to all the mystery of this gathering and wild flying and cawing of the birds ; the painful barking and wild trembling and midnight howling of the dogs. The neighbors have found there, and now completely removed it from the snow, the frozen, poorly clad corpse of a human being. A basket is beside it, and a jug half filled with poorest wine. It is a female—an aged woman—long dead, and buried in the deep snows of the winter !

The coroner's inquest that was held on the body, decide that she died from exposure to the cold.

But who is this snow-clad one ? Whence came *she* ? Have any lost a friend, beloved, revered—a grey-haired mother, wife, sister, neighbor ? And echo answers, have they ?

Go throughout the families of the place, and no one will be found who have missed her. There is not a social relation snapped by her decease and absence in the town. No church there has lost a member, no hamlet is one the less for her.

The town is astir, however, with the news, and many

go to the lonely place where the body was discovered, and walk away saying, "this is a strange and mysterious affair!"

The investigations of the coroner's jury go to show that the woman was aged and friendless, poorly clad, and that she probably belonged in some other town—perhaps even a pauper; that she was overtaken by night in a severe storm, or cold day, and betook herself for shelter to this clump of trees, where she perished, and lay entombed over the sojourn of winter.

Word is forthwith sent out into the towns around announcing this sad and unusual event, and giving all the particulars of the inquest.

"No such person has been living here!" said Squire Ben Stout.

"I think not!" said the selectman, Mr. Jonas Savage.

"You know—of course you know—you would know—Mr. Savage, if any body was missing from the roll of our paupers—of course you would," said Squire Ben.

"I ought to know," said that gentleman, "I have been there often enough this winter—and—lets me see—they are more full now than ever, I believe."

"Well, so I had got the idea," replied the Squire, "I guess it don't belong to us any how; do you, Savage?"

"The body!"

"Yes, of course—the body!"

"Don't see how it can, if they are all on hand and alive."

"Just so; that's my opinion. We of course should miss a pauper gone all winter! Better tell them we havn't lost any. Faith and here comes Haddock—and on my soul! Bunce! How do you do, gentlemen? Savage and I were just counting noses down at the *poor-house*, and find it all right with us; about this dead

person, what is it, Haddock? Do you get any hold of the rumor, Bunce, eh?"

"Why, we feel a little startled," said the latter.

"We fear, Squire Stout," said Mr. Haddock, "that the deceased woman does belong to us, and is the aged Mrs. Dodge of the poor-house family."

"Whe-w!" exclaimed the Squire—"Dodge! Dodge. Did I ever know any thing about Dodge, Savage?"

"Why, I rather think," said that mouth-piece of the old Squire, "there is a Dodge on the books."

"I've a confoundly treacherous memory," said the Squire. "What Dodge was it, and how long had she been on?"

"Mrs. Dodge was the widow of Mr. Hiram Dodge, formerly a thriving business man here," said Mr. Haddock, "and at last a poor man, keeper of the turnpike gate. You remember *him*, Squire Ben?"

"To be sure! to be sure, Mr. Haddock, I do indeed.

A fine man of business and character he once was. Pity though that he fell off, and went down; a great, sad misfortune. And our Dodge on the roll was his widow. I declare, I recollect it now as well as if it happened only yesterday. But then it can't be *she*—you know—why, she was of the very *first* family in Crampton! No, it's some other person—it's not Mrs. Dodge, Savage! Heavens, no! Besides, Captain Bunce would miss her, you know, at once, and look her up."

"Oh, yes, to be sure," said Captain Bunce, "we missed her, and I asked the paupers about her, and we kinder expected the old lady in every day or two. She didn't come, however, and after a reasonable while we gave up looking for her. One can't spend all the winter months, you know, running after wandering and vagabond paupers."

"True. That's true, Captain Bunce, I don't see but you are excusable if it is she."

"Have they not a claim on us, gentlemen," inquired Mr. Haddock, in a very solemn and serious manner, "for at least a reasonable share of attention and sympathy?"

"Now, Haddock, don't! Don't go into the matter as if any body was unreasonable and inhuman," said Savage. "You know that Captain Bunce makes every provision in his power ——"

"I don't know any such thing, Mr. Savage," he exclaimed, interrupting him. "I am not at all conscious of any such thing. Captain Bunce is here, and can answer for himself; I can't."

"Why it is simply here, Captain," said Savage—"when you find any of the folks gone, you feel it your duty to inquire after them, don't you?"

"To be sure."

"Yes; and so you inquired, as usual, about Mrs. Dodge?"

"To be sure."

"Yes; and so you would inquire for Tucker, or any of them?"

"To be sure."

"And if you are around about, if it comes handy, you inquire of strangers?"

"Oh, yes, to be sure."

"I thought so. Well, now, Mrs. Dodge, she went away and didn't come back—and you couldn't hear any thing of her?"

"Just so, sir."

"Why, it is as clear as daylight, gentlemen," said Mr. Savage, "that Captain Bunce is O. K. He's an upright *overseer*—a very careful, conscientious man in his *contract*."

"Well, gentlemen, what's to be done?" inquired the Squire. "I think, on the whole, it must be Mrs. Dodge, and that she wandered off last winter as was stated, and got into the snow. Think so, Haddock?"

"We think it altogether probable," answered Mr. Haddock.

"Oh! there ain't any doubt of it," said Savage. "She's been gone, it seems, and couldn't be found all winter. Now, the spring has set in, up she turns, froze to death, and covered up in one of these d—— deep snows. Who in thunder could expect the old lady to come to light till the snows left? And so, it's all right and nat'ral, here she is."

This harangue of Savage's, which set out the case in a very vivid, life-like manner—in striking brevity of style, after the usual terseness of earnest men, in right earnest ways of speaking—was a perfect settler of the whole matter to the overwhelming conviction and satisfaction of both the Squire and the Captain; and it was ordered that Captain Bunce, accompanied by Mr. Savage, should go over to A——, and if they found it the body of Mrs. Dodge—the lamented and diligently-searched for, late a pauper of Crampton, and once the belle of Crampton—they were to fetch it home, and as soon as might be, consistent with funeral proprieties, give it a (Christian) pauper's burial!

\* \* \* \* \*

A dull, heavy tread—a slowly moving vehicle—wearing, jaded horses—a heavy, lead-like load—and the team draws up at the side entrance of the poor-house in Crampton.

"It is best, Captain—altogether best, as you say," remarked Mr. Savage. "They would be terribly shocked if the body were carried in and kept over night. It is

now four o'clock. Let the folks come out and see the corpse. Send word to have the minister meet us at the grave—which is dug, I presume, by this time, for I told Whuggs to have one ready—and let her be buried to-day."

"By all means," said the Captain.

Mr. Haddock was sent for, and counselled delay; but they out-voted him. And the poor folks came out as they best could to see their old companion, who had in this singular manner gone to her last abode. They were struck with the naturalness of the features, and with the very smile that the old lady usually carried about with her when she was pleased, and in her sociable moods. They all affirmed at once to the identity of the corpse, and in due time a little procession moved on—and on—and on—towards the last old home that dying mortals, reaching, tarry in from generation to generation to the end.\*

\* \* \* \* \*

Gathered around their cheerless fire, the lessening band shivered and paled before the striking testimony of their own dreams.

"Ah," said Mag, "I once was heedless about them. I didn't believe a word of them. I laughed at them—and now see how they're fulfilled!"

\* **WOMAN FOUND DEAD.**--The body of an elderly woman was found in the woods close by Three-Cornered Pond, in the south part of Granby, on Sunday. From appearances, she had been dead several months: the body had been covered with snow. A basket, and some small change, was found beside her. She was apparently an American woman, and may have been a pauper. An inquest was held, and the verdict was in accordance with the facts. From her dress, basket and bundle, it is believed she was Mrs. Lattimer, of Simsbury, who has been missing since last October. This supposition is strengthened by the fact that Mrs. L. was last seen in October near this spot, in a partially bewildered condition, endeavoring to find her way to Simsbury from her place in Granby, where she had been kept with some of the town poor.—*Hartford Times*, April 1st, 1857.

"Yes," said Mrs. Prescott, "she was married to the 'misty white gentleman,' the winter's flying snow; it fell over her as a blanket, and kept her safely. She slept calmly all the winter and suffered no more. And then was she not taken to the great wedding of the Lamb, to the great and crowded assemblage there? Oh! Mag, what a dream—what a dream was that!"

"A dreadful, solemn one!" she answered. "Yes, I'm now and forever a firm believer in them. Aunt Joanna Dodge has undoubtedly got to heaven, where she is happy, and now, who knows—who knows but the other dream will come to pass, eh?" And Mag walked up and down the room with folded hands.

"Pshaw! pshaw!" said Dan.

"Pshaw! pshaw! *pshaw!* if you will," sputtered Mag, "I know it will. There's Jims already got out of the poor-house and become a smart one they say. And who knows what's before the whole of us?"

"Dan!" said the old widow, "is the Lord's hand shortened that it cannot save?"

"That's a plaguy sight more than I know," said he.

"But I know," says Mag. "*He's Almighty!*"

"Yes," said Mrs. Rice, "it's nothing for him to do wonders."

Had Mrs. Dodge died when she was Joanna Martin, in the height of her loveliness, at seventeen, all the young men and ladies of Crampton would have gone mourning to her grave. How many words of consolation would her parents and sisters have received! What prayers would have been offered, what sermons preached! Had she died at forty, in the zenith of her womanhood, in the full glare of her influence, the pattern of good mothers and wives, what an array of grief-stricken ones had there been at her funeral! What solemn tones would have

been in the tolling bell! Who of Crampton's best men would not have gladly officiated as her pall-bearers!—What newspaper would not have been more than willing to give her an extended obituary! And what a rude shock would have gone over the hearts of all in the parish had not prayers been asked and said in her memory!

So it makes a difference how we die!

Men should not allow themselves to say or even think it dies not.

Reader, if you die from one of New England's poor-houses—though now you may be Judge, Squire, Captain—Mrs. this one or Mrs. that—if you die a pauper, you will never get your case into any pulpit in the land; nor will any respectable newspaper give you an obituary notice, unless it be as a statistical fact, probably a cutting one, sarcastic, facetious or solemn, for the benefit of SUMMARY,—a long, wide awake, factotum sort of an individual the newspapers are mighty thick with!

Mrs. Dodge happened to die just as she did, and when she did—in a remarkable manner even for a pauper; but prayers were not asked or said for her in church; no one went to her grave but officials, and nobody considered the world a loser by her departure.—The papers announced the singular manner of her death, and SUMMARY took it up in several quarters, and Scrap-Book pasted the announcement on a blank brown-paper page for future reference; but that was the end of it—that was all. No marble ever graced the head of her grave; no exotic plant, rose or shrub was planted on its sods. Wild nature, alone, grassed her sleeping place, and the sexton was the only man of a thousand who could point you to it.

"It makes a difference—guess it does indeed," said *Old Mortality*, "death is the same, but we are not!"



## CHAPTER XXIX.

Mrs. ARMSTRONG'S great apprehension. Poverty is very ugly to look straight at!

"It's a dreadful place! oh-h-h!" sighed and groaned Mrs. Armstrong, whose husband was a merchant, when she heard these things. "And it is a possible fate to many a one of us. Oh, how could I survive it—how live in that awful, wretched manner for an hour! And yet there is aunt Prescott who holds out, and they say is comparatively cheerful. But what neglect, what cruelty, what uncleanness, what language, what absence of the fear of God and of man. I could not live there, and yet my husband says 'we may come to it.' I know I should never endure it. I would rather die to-night! How careful ought every body to be in his expenses who is exposed to such a fate as this!" Mrs. Armstrong declined going to a sleigh ride that day, the last of the sleighing, with her husband, "for," said she, "it would be an awful thing to want the very necessaries of life in the poor-house in consequence of extravagance now."

"Pshaw, Lucy, who's been scaring you to-day, pray?"

"Oh! I am scared to death every day, when I see what danger there is of poverty. Don't you know, Mr. Armstrong, you are in debt? That you have notes coming due every day, and that you are harassed and dream ugly dreams? Now be warned by me, and don't run headlong into expenses. Let us save money while we have a little, for the tender mercies of the town are *cruelty*."

"Well, Lucy, if you ain't about crazy on this point, I'll give up. I tell you I am worth ten thousand dollars to-day, and there is just no danger of the poor-house at all."

"You needn't argue in that way, Frederic. I know that ten thousand dollars is a dreadful little sum of money in these days! The interest of it is but six hundred dollars a year, and if we had nothing but that we should soon come to poverty, and beggary itself. Oh-h-h!"

"Lucy, now pray get rid of this whim."

"I tell you, Fred, it *ain't* a 'whim,' it's living truth."

"What's set you agoing so intolerably fast to-day?" he asked.

"Oh, nothing new—only—yes. There is old aunt Joanna Dodge who used to be the belle of Crampton, I have heard my grandmother speak of her as the handsomest creature she ever set eyes on, and she was a familiar friend of my mother twenty years ago, she has been buried all winter in the snow, just because she had become a pauper, and nobody cared enough about her to seek for her."

"Well, it is a hard and tough story, that's a fact. But why need it so frighten you?"

"Frighten me! Because it is such a dreadful place, the poor-house. Such a cold, starving, corrupt, forgotten community is there. I shudder when I think it even possible that you and I, or one of our children should ever go over its threshold."

Mr. Armstrong embraced his wife lovingly, and assured her that he really believed they would be able to keep out of it, and admitted there was too much extravagance and too much disregard of the facts of poverty daily passing before them. He said he meant to be

economical and wary, and begged his wife to regain her composure.

One of the boys soon after came in for a shilling to pay for mending his sled.

"Willard!" said Mrs. Armstrong, "I suppose there are some poor boys at the poor-house who never have a sled, and who almost never see a shilling. Now, don't you think it wicked to break your sled and then come to me for twelve-and-a-half cents to mend it, when your poor father and mother can hardly live as it is?"

"Ma'am!" exclaimed the frightened boy.

"I say, my son, we are poor and can't afford to mend sleds."

"I didn't know we were *so* poor, mother!"

"Well, *we may be*; and it is the duty of all of you children to try and save money, so as not to come to want, and go to that dreadful place, the poor-house."

Ellen came in and begged her mother to buy her a new pair of shoes, but Ellen was denied.

"Your old shoes, Ellen, are better than many wear, and many a one has been reduced to beggary by needlessly spending money for shoes, ribbons, puff-combs, rings, bracelets, and hair-pins."

"Mother, do you think we shall be?" inquired Ellen, thoughtfully.

"I cannot tell you, my child. Sometimes I greatly fear it. Expenses are all the time increasing, and there seems no end to the extravagance of building, trading, living. If we ever do come down to the poor-house we shall be mortified to death, besides undergoing all the suffering."

Mrs. Armstrong told a pedlar to go away; she didn't need any of his goods. She declined giving even *Miss Flush*, president of the Ladies' Sewing Society, her

usual annual donation of a quarter of a dollar on the same plea.

"Why, Miss Flush, we are all bound to the poor-house; did you know it? Did you know that there was going to be an awful crash among us one of these days? And then to think of the end to which we are approaching—perhaps just such another death as Mrs. Dodge!"

Miss Flush said it was an awful and flesh-crawling statement: it had almost sickened her of society and of life. But she daily said her prayers, and interested herself in works of benevolence, and so hoped she should be saved from absolute poverty, and especially from the poor-house.

"Well, I do hope, Miss Flush, you'll never come to that."

"As I live a single life," said that lady——

"Nobody knows how long you may," quickly retorted the other.

"What, ma'am! Did you imply that I might be married some day?"

"I did."

"And yet you know that I am violently opposed to matrimony?"

"True; but ladies frequently marry against their inclination——"

"Never shall I give myself away, Mrs. Armstrong, to a person who has not my entire regard."

"One would imagine, Miss Flush, that most ladies would marry any body with a good, genteel property that would keep them from want."

"You are severe on the ladies to-day, Mrs. Armstrong. Now that is not my idea at all. I think our ladies marry from true principle, and from a desire of correct happiness."

*"I think that many of them marry without much idea*

at all, except to make a display and avoid being old maids. But who would not rather be an old maid all her days, than to be the mother of children sent to the poor-house !”

“ Well, it is a dreadful, dismal place, I suppose.”

“ Have you never been there ?”

“ Been there—what, I !”

“ Yes, to be sure.”

“ Why, no, of course : have you ?”

“ What, me !”

“ Yes, indeed, you.”

“ No, not inside ; but I have heard enough of it to frighten me out of sleep for a fortnight. (*Heigho !*)”

“ It is said the town takes good care of the inmates.”

“ Miss Flush, *it is false !* The town does not furnish them with any of the comforts of life. Many of them sleep on the floor, in poorly-warmed and exposed rooms ; many have the poorest of clothing ; some of them almost starve to death. And the evil falls where you wouldn’t expect it—on our own native-born citizens.”

“ Well, I am surprised !”

“ It is literally so ; ask Squire Ben, he’ll tell you all about it.”

“ Uncle Stout seems to think they are comfortably off.”

“ Ask Mr. Haddock.”

“ Oh, I know ; Haddock’s a fanatic.”

“ Well, suppose he is. He has been all over the poor-house, which is more than any of us can say.”

“ And now, my dear friend, (to change the subject,) you won’t forsake us and decline to bestow your usual donation, now don’t refuse, Mrs. Armstrong—pray, don’t now.”

“ I must to-day, I certainly must ; I do not feel that a

cent of money in my possession is my own to give away to anything."

"True, but this is lending, as we hope, to the Lord."

"Well, if so, the Lord loves the *cheerful* giver. I must bring myself right before I can do any good with my money."

Accordingly Miss Flush bade her a kind afternoon, and went elsewhere.

On the next Sabbath, Mrs. Armstrong was at church, in a rich, dark silk dress, and a very heavy cashmere shawl, but her face wore a rather serious aspect, and it was not relieved till the minister preached on the sin of extravagance, and prayed that the people might not come by their sins to the doors of poverty.

"I told you so, Mrs. Pepper," said her rich old miserly husband. "I have long foreseen it—the sequel can't be long coming. We are doomed to the poor-house."

"What now?" grumbled she.

"George wants more money!" (whispered the old miser.)

"George does?"

"Yes!"

"Well, he can't have it, can he?"

"No, not fairly—not without security."

"Then he can't have it at all, can he?"

"I don't see that he can."

"How can he? Hasn't he any security left?"

"His stock is about all mortgaged!"

"Then tell him he can't have it, hey?"

"I think I must—but—but——"

"'But' what?"

"He will secure a little further——"

"Look out, old man, for the poor-house!"

"*I'm afraid on't, I vow.*"

"If we get there we shall never go any further, up nor down."

"How so?"

"It's as bad as the pit," said she.

"Horrible necessity," said her husband, and they both ruminated over it for a long time.

"One thing is as plain as day to me, Mrs. Pepper."

"What is it, eh?"

"That we can't afford to be so extravagant!"

"I know it."

"We can't afford to buy tea, flour, sugar, tobacco."

"No," said she, "nor any new shoes, nor pipes, nor snuff."

"We must eat up close all the old crusts. Have we any left of yesterday?"

"Yes, two or three pieces, and some bad cold potatoes."

"Make our dinner out of them."

"Can we afford salt?"

"And vinegar!"

"And pepper?"

"And mustard! No, no, *no*!" said he. Salt is good enough alone sometimes. We must live on nothing that costs us anything; we shall then be at the poor-house soon enough."

## CHAPTER XXX.

**THE Missionary's Letter.** We have known one Missionary who complained that he couldn't be thankful enough, and another who complained that he was too thankful. So we fancy that somewhere near the middle of the beam lies the true emotion.

IF you would not have known James, (*alias* Jims,) the next day after his introduction into Mr. Rodman's family, you certainly would not have known him a month later. The very next day he appeared in a new hat, new grey pants, brown jacket, neat shoes and stockings, with a clean, bright face, and well-combed black and curling locks. He stood also erect, like a free boy and a happy one, with a look of firmness and decision that occasionally gleamed out in the days of his degradation, in circumstances connected with his past history.

Mrs. Rodman was proud of him, and with her husband formed a system of daily life for the present, in which they strove to bring out his powers of self-government and personal reliance, as well in small things as in those that were greater. They wished him to pursue a course of study and of life that would lead him to deep reflection, and so bring him to realize the true nature of things, to know something of his own being, and of his personal obligations; of God's holiness; of the nature of sin, of love and truth, and to lead him to right exercises of mind in general. They did not expect the boy would immediately become a man of maturity of knowledge, *but they did expect that he would make progress*



in knowledge by observation and experience every day he lived. He was not too young to entertain many definite and clear ideas of life ; and such had been his position for more than twelve years, that there was reason to begin forthwith a course of thorough systematic development of his true nature, and put him on the right track of life.

James, rejoicing in his newly-found liberty, was perfectly willing to conform to the rules they established over him, and his conduct every day showed that he appreciated their kindness, and that he was determined to make it the duty of his life to please them.

Mr. and Mrs. Rodman themselves at the first attended altogether to his instruction. They found him able to read a little, though awkwardly and with hesitation. He could also write a very poor page. Of arithmetic he knew the simplest rules ; of grammar and history almost nothing. But such was his desire and such his application, such the grasp of his intellect and the attention of his friends, that in three months he had shot ahead far in advance of his friends' expectation. He also immediately came to be respected by the other boys, and to be known to them. He was received into the Sabbath-school, and was attentive and respectful to his teachers, always in the slip also on the Sabbath. Scarcely a vestige of his former character could be noticed about him at the end of three months ; and among the boys and girls he associated with it scarcely seemed to be remembered that he had once been a poor, abused, a wild, good-for-nothing pauper !

Meanwhile Miss Flush and her ladies made up and forwarded the missionary things—a very large, complete assortment of clothing, and of other articles that would be wanted somewhere, and they sent it off with many

tears and prayers. Mr. Rodman himself wrote a letter, besides the one which Miss Flush penned, forwarding it unsealed, along with the articles sent, hoping it would meet the eye of the fortunate yet afflicted family to whom the goods might come in the far West, as soon as they opened the box!

There was great rejoicing over this long enterprise completed. Indeed, it was a work that required much devotion, labor, patience, and calculation to bring through successfully—and these were not wanting in the elements of Miss Flush's constitution. She was great on boxes of this sort, and the parish of Crampton knew her importance and worth, although we are of the opinion that it did not but about half know and appreciate her after all!

When this was all done, which it took five weeks instead of three to do, and Mrs. Smith said she must have made a wrong calculation in putting it at three, the society was ready to do a day's work for Mrs. Phillips' poor neighbors. In the meantime, one of the children had been carried off by a sudden cold and lung fever, and the necessities of the family had been relieved by the charities of the neighbors. But Mrs. Phillips had calls for help from other sources, and the society's offer was accepted.

As for the paupers, it was the general opinion that Captain Bunce would resent any interference to relieve them, and it was left with Mrs. Haddock to do as she thought best in that respect.

The ladies were now at work for the merchant, Mr. Longwell.

They entered on this work with a great stock of enthusiasm, and made by calculation out of it and a public *fair that they intended to advertise about strawberry*

time, at least five hundred dollars. With this money they were going to remodel the church pulpit, new cushion and carpet the house, and put a new row of posts with iron chains in front of it along by the side-walk.

In the course of a few weeks, Miss Flush received the following letter from a distant missionary, to whom it seems their box of clothing, bedding, etc., etc., had been forwarded :—

“ *M—, III., May 25, 184—.*

MISS E. FLUSH :—

Your favor and that of the Rev. Mr. Rodman, accompanying a large box of clothing, and other domestic work, came safely to hand on the 20th inst. We live in a retired part of the world, and have but small opportunity of seeing the faces of our benefactors. Your generosity and that of the ladies of Crampton, is very generally regarded in our small family as a favor worthy of the highest regard. We shall hope to appropriate the articles by and bye to the use contemplated by the kind and generous donors, but are at present making up our supply from a similar presentation sent on by my wife's friends in New York.

Accept, dear friend, for yourself and your associates, my kindest Christian regards, and in these my wife begs heartily to unite. The pressure of public business must be my apology for brevity.

Truly, &c., &c.,

MOSES DIAMOND.”

Now, Miss E. Flush had often received letters of acknowledgment for similar favors before. But she had never received one quite as cool and business-like as this. She and her friends expected to receive a letter of at least four pages, giving an account of the particular adaptedness of every article of goods in the box to the peculiar situation of some one in the family that received it, containing over and over again the great sense of obligation awakened, abounding in ejaculatory thanksgivings, and making a general confession of “unworthiness to receive the like of it,” &c. &c. It was expected

also to be a document, extracts from which the pastor would read from the pulpit, and in the social meetings ; especially giving a summary of the religious condition of the West, its educational wants, and so forth ; also setting forth the state of the temperance enterprise, and that of the Sabbath-school—happy if the document did not cover eight instead of four pages !

But this was decidedly cool—too cool—it did not pay. Some of the ladies said they should know it when they gave anything for another missionary box. Others said he was a rich man, and had a rich wife—still others that he didn't know any better—and others still, that he was proud, and ought not to be a missionary. Some even went so far as to affirm that they had rather given the box to the town paupers ! or scattered the articles about to the poor in the various neighborhoods of the town.

Expecting too much in one case, and doing too little in another, they were at the end visited by a natural punishment from both. They forgot the great rule of the Gospel : " This ought ye to have done, and not to have left the other undone." They had no idea that any needy, seedy missionary family at the West, could receive a gift-box of clothing from them without writing a most melting letter of thanks for it—a letter that would stir up the emotional feeling of all the parish—a letter that would go into the religious newspapers, and stir up to emulation a great many other religious sewing societies throughout the country. They expected more would be said and done about that box of clothing altogether than the real value of twenty such boxes. And they seemed to forget that a poor and self-denying missionary could have the independence of mind to write a modest acknowledgment of their generosity, and even *harbor the wish to cover up from the eyes of the world his necessity*

*of charity !* THEY would publish it broad-cast over the land ; HE would wish it a transaction between himself and them.

Do we know our own hearts ? Do they not often lust within us to envy ? The shock to the Missionary Sewing Society of Crampton by this letter of acknowledgment was very great indeed.

Their efforts went now, for a considerable time, to the repairing of their own church. They raised a good sum of money by their industry, and appropriated it in that way till they accomplished their object, to the great satisfaction of the whole town. Crampton was regarded by the neighboring towns as a sort of model place for churches and sewing societies. It was a neat, handsome, well-ordered, business community and town. The church, especially, was a thing that everybody had a good word for ; and *it seemed to pay* for what was laid out on it. To all appearance, the Gospel declaration, "The poor ye have always with you," did not apply to Crampton. Indeed, had any one asked an active common citizen of the town if there were many poor people in the place, he would probably have said, "No—almost none at all ;" meaning respectable poor people, of course. And perhaps he would not have known that in the poor-house of that town there were always to be found from ten to fifteen and twenty paupers, so utterly wretched and woe-begone that their condition, in common with the universal condition of paupers, led some, even among the high and wealthy, to tremble at the possibility of their own future poverty ; so forgotten, that the cast-off garments of even the common people were not thought of for them and given for their comfort ; so poorly nourished, wet, and cold in their leaky habitations and cheerless rooms, that they paid out of their

little class the heaviest per cent. of death in the town per annum—a community in want of every temporal mercy, for it had been stripped from them; wanting spiritual light and consolation, for they were feeble and dispirited; the remnants and relics of themselves; the “vestiges of creation;” the needy poor of the hedges and waysides these—would he have known all this? Had he seen, heard, thought of it? Had he ever been there—ever taken it into his mind to go and inquire if there was a sufferer in the house of want to whom he, for Jesus’ sake, could bring relief? Alas! the paupers of New England linger near their last goal, few remembering them in their sad and deplorable state of absolute, unchangeable poverty. And surely poverty is an evil oft leading one to crime!

“Thou knowest what a thing is Poverty  
Among the fallen on evil days;  
‘Tis Crime, and Fear, and Infamy,  
And houseless Want, in frozen ways,  
Wandering ungarmented, and Pain,  
And, worse than all, that inward stain,  
Foul Self-contempt, which drowns in sneers  
Youth’s starlight smile, and makes its tears  
First like hot gall, then dry forever!”—SHELLEY.

*Rosalind & Helen*, p. 314, Hazard’s ed., Phila., 1856.

\* \* \* \* \*

“Homes there are, we are sure, that are no homes; the home of the very poor.” \* \* \*

“But what if there be no bread in the cupboard?” \* \* \*

“The children of the very poor do not prattle.”

CHARLES LAMB’S *Essay of Elia*, xii, p. 291-2.

\* \* \* \* \*

“Nothing in poverty so ill is borne

As its exposing men to grinning scorn.”

BOSWELL’S *Johnson*, p. 28, Bond’s ed., Balt., Oldham’s imit. of Jux.

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"Extreme and abject poverty is, vice excepted, the most deplorable condition of human nature."

HARRIET LEE's *Canterbury Tales*, "Claudine," vol. ii., Mason Bro.'s ed.

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"The consequence of poverty is dependence."—WEB.

"'PAUPER'—A poor person ; *particularly*, one so indigent as to depend on the parish or town for maintenance. \* \* The increase of *pauperism* is an alarming evil."—IBID.

## CHAPTER XXXI.

ABRAHAM BACON and Mrs. Bacon, Mr. and Mrs. Siddleton—actors all, in the grand Pauper Drama, representing Shrewdness, Profit, Speculation, Genius, Morality and Religion.

FATHER Time with his light, quick tread, passed along over Crampton five successive summers, and James Sherman, a tall grown, handsome, self-possessed youth, borne by him through every difficulty, and guarded by the same scythe that had been the scourge and death of others, was now entered a student at Yale College. He was nearly seventeen years of age, and had long since, under the kind tuition of his guardians, the Rodmans, got far out of the slough of ignorance and pauperism.

Five years flow quickly by with some ; they linger on with others, and make deep furrows and strong points in society every where. In Crampton it was so. Mrs. Phillips was no more, and her stricken husband was a sufferer from acute rheumatism, though living at home still with one of his married daughters. Mr. and Mrs. Shire had removed from town ; Squire Ben was grown more corpulent and more fond of ale ; Savage more and more keen for trade and speculation. Indeed he was now rather heavy on the grand list, and grumbled sorely at the taxes. Long since, Captain Bunce had lost the poor-house, lost his property, lost one of his eyes, was half incapacitated for labor, and lived with his blind daughter Henrietta, in a low, rude cottage, attached to *which there was a small garden, the rent of all, ten dol-*



lars a year. Henrietta could knit, and wash, as well as do a little sewing. Her father was often intoxicated and helpless. They received some help from the selectmen of the town, and it was expected would soon be thrown entirely on it as paupers ! Of the old paupers there yet survived aunt Prescott, Mag Davis, Tucker, Roxy, Dan and Bill. All the others had gone to their long rest, besides many new ones received during this period. Mr. and Mrs. Haddock and all their family remained. Miss Flush was yet as busy as ever in her public enterprises, although she had declined, for the first time in seven years, at the last annual meeting of the ladies' sewing society, the post of president in that association. The office was filled by the appointment of Mrs. Smith.

Both Mr. and Mrs. Boyce had paid the debt of nature, and rested side by side in the village church-yard, their graves identified by two marble slabs, procured for them by their friends, and Alice was now a sweet girl of twelve, the adopted daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Rodman.

The paupers of the place were as numerous as ever, and fared about as well as when we last knew them. They had been from under Captain Bunce's care more than four years. Two years Mr. Abraham Bacon had them. Mr. Bacon seldom furnished them with fresh ham ; although he flourished a surname that indicated an ample supply of that delicious sort of provision. "Abraham" was his affix, or appendage to "Bacon," that came up at his christening a good while ago. He was so called not from any positive indications that he was an especial favorite of heaven, or would be a prince in the land, but because it had a good sound to it, was the antecedent initial letter to B—Bacon, and might *have a pious bearing on him from its historical prominence.*

But Abraham Bacon in his maturity was less an object of love and attraction than Abraham Bacon in his infancy and early youth.

In size the man was short, though broad shouldered, thick and heavy all over, a man good for an hundred and eighty pounds. His face was of a deep red color, such at all times, as some men carry when violently angry; features large, with swollen furrows in his cheeks and around his huge mouth and blunt, old-fashioned sort of nose. Two moles marked his left cheek, and a scar his right. Altogether Mr. Bacon was a specimen-man of toughness and energy, fond of cider, not averse to roast beef. He possessed very little education, and in refinement had made almost no progress in a life of fifty years! He was a shrewd, close-calculating man of business.

In a sharp rivalry with one or two competitors for these loaves and fishes of the town, when Captain Bunce lost them, Abraham, by a little diplomatic shrewdness, got the bid, and the paupers went into his quarters for the space of two years.

These "quarters" constituted one of his claims to the care of the poor. Abraham put in the following description of his premises—"A large two-story house, forty by twenty-eight feet, with ten rooms, besides ample garret room and cellar. A long wing, slightly disconnected with the main building, twenty by fifty feet, water-tight, and capable of good ventilation, used formerly for pork packing, boiling food for cattle, and so forth, but now in good order for comfortably housing the paupers. Will accommodate above and below twenty-five persons very happily."

Mr. Bacon got the contract to keep them one year for six hundred dollars; and as soon as it was conve-

nient, they were removed there—some walking, others taken in a cart and the long wagon. They carried all their effects in the first exodus—these consisting of very little other than what they had on, or what each tied up in an old handkerchief, or rolled together in a paper. The women went in black and white straw bonnets, of faded, and much worn, and very dingy appearance—wide, flaring styles, of past, forgotten years. They were dressed in short-waisted kersey frocks, or tattered cheap calico, loosely hooked together, and unevenly at that, gaping in front and behind, loose and flapping at the neck. Ragged quilts hung down below the skirt, and a very great figure of shabbiness they made altogether. The men, in slouching, torn, indented hats of every possible old fashion—in coats torn and seedy and yawning, too large and too small, vests and pants too short and too long, faded, worn, and soiled, with open necks, and dirty shirts accompanied them, some with and others without shoes. This *outré* company made land at pious Abraham's one morning, the first week in October, before ten o'clock, and were ushered into and introduced to their new quarters.

The long wing to the main house, "slightly disconnected," was in reality apart from it only about three feet; and a door opened from it on the end to the kitchen of the other building. It was divided into two main apartments. In the one there were from three to five straw beds for the females—two of them on bedsteads, the others on the floor. The other room contained two bedsteads, with straw beds, for the men, and a stairway leading to a low, dark chamber under the roof, where an indefinite number of persons might lie on the floor. This was the eating-room—also the kitchen and sitting-room of the establishment. These were the accommodations proper for the paupers.



Abraham, and his Risk.



Much better than none at all, it must be confessed, they were. Aunt Dodge would not have frozen to death if she could have got to her quarters. But if we consider that these poor and feeble folks were, some of them, persons reared in the lap of comfort, and accustomed to the sacredness of *home*—the females, especially, entertaining notions of delicacy, and personal protection from rudeness and vulgarity; if we remember their helplessness and need of indulgences, we shall be led to believe that this old pork-house of Abraham Bacon, with only one slender partition, one large fire-place, no carpets, no curtains except newspapers pinned up as temporary shades, without soft beds or chairs, low and crowded, the good and bad together—that this place, I say, must be a poor place for happiness; a poor place for daily joy, for nightly pains, for sickness, weakness, decrepitude and death.

But how could *they* remedy it? What voice had *they* in the condition of life they were to lead?

They had no voice in it but that of entreaty or complaint—a voice that might be answered with insult or with renewed rigor of treatment. The paupers must submit. They own nothing. Every thing is a gratuity. Live while they can—die when they must; but let them not dictate!

They cannot choose their own masters or keepers. It is possible that among them there is one who was himself once an overseer of the poor. But it makes no difference; he must come into the same treatment with the others. The rule works evenly and well for all.

Why should not the vision of the poor-house rise in dreadful terror on the souls of all men and women in the North exposed to that tide of fortune which makes *one a pauper*? That the old rural poor-house was and *is a frightful reality*, we dare not deny.

Mr. Haddock resided four miles from Bacon's, and Mr. Phillips about two. His house was quite on the east side of the parish, among the hills. His farm was a rather hilly, hard piece of land for cultivation, but good for grazing, and, in consequence, he was in the habit of raising considerable stock for market.

The paupers could drive his cattle to pasture, help repair fences, milk the cows, feed the stock, and so forth. They were likewise able to do a little hoeing in the corn-field, weeding in the garden, coarse sewing in the house, washing of dishes, mopping and scouring. Mr. Bacon thus calculated a good twenty per cent. profit on their necessary expenses. He went over the figures a good many times before he ventured to undertake the risk. One of his papers preserved read as follows :

Use of apartments, pork room and garret, per year, say,	\$ 10.00
Cost of apparel per year for each one, say 15, each \$2, is,	30.00
(Note.—Apparel, shoes, &c., <i>cast-off</i> articles.)	
“ “ fuel per year, say brush-wood and rotten stumps, &c.,	5.00
“ “ “ “ “ to cook for them extra, <i>possible</i> , .	2.00
“ “ extra clothing, fixings, nursing, and the like in sickness,	3.00
“ “ Doctor's bill, in all, per year, say,	5.00
“ “ Sexton's, undertaker's, &c., in all, perhaps, a year,	
(Note.—Must expect a good many to die off. But there's a positive gain in this, in the matter of support, so say,)	
“ “ paupers who stray off into other poor-houses and notice given me,	15.00
“ “ provisions, say 15 persons in <i>all</i> , \$2 per week, 52 weeks @ \$2,	10.00
“ “ furniture, say, in all,	104.00
“ “ extra help to take care of them,	10.00
	<hr/>
	204.00
Trouble to my wife in taking care of them, .	\$100.00
“ “ myself “ “ “ “ “ “ .	300.00
	<hr/>
	400.00
Total, . . . . .	\$604.00
Deduct 20 per cent. for their labor from expenses, .	40.08
	<hr/>
Whole expenses. . . . .	\$564.92

Abraham concluded on the whole that, saying nothing of the four hundred dollars to himself and wife for their salary in the great and necessary vocation of taking care of them, he could stand it with twenty per cent. on their earnings. This he determined on, or he would take it out of their rations. This seems to have been the intention of their keepers generally. If they found the paupers, i. e., some of them, strong enough to earn some ten or twenty per cent. of the whole cost, they would continue their meals as usual, viz., beans and cheap pork one day in seven, bean soup and bread and cider one day, cider each day, (if needed,) salt prime beef one day, warmed bones and grizzle one day, and crusts of brown and white bread from the house ; Friday, hard codfish, or number three rusty mackerel ; Saturday, neck pieces of beef, or liver, pickings of the last days, and in summer occasional luxuries of greens and vegetables ; cheap tea, without cream or sugar, was given them at Abraham's. This was about the general bill of fare. Of course nobody could be expected to starve on it if he could relish the bill. But, we say again, if the paupers were not helpful and saving by their manual labors, their rations were cut down to a point where the proprietor could feel himself safe. He did not take them to lose money. He was not expected by the town to feed and pamper them as he would pigs and fine stock for market ! They were only broken-down human creatures, who, even at the best, would stay with us but a little time, and the whole of that time be to us only a bill of expense. Why endeavor to lengthen out life under these conditions ?

Madam Bacon stands out to view as one of those ever-busy, all-work sort of Yankee women each of us has seen and read of a hundred times. She was a smallish body, firmly put together, her arms as hard and solid as bed-



posts, her figure, though slight to the view, having a decided appearance of elasticity and vigor. In fact, there did not seem to be a weak, or faint spot in her. She loved work ; she loved the broom, the needle, the loom, the axe, the hoe, the coffee-mill, the dinner-kettle, the tea-kettle, the oven, the fire-place, the brasses, the carpets, the windows, the milk pails, the milk room, the churn, the cheese press, fowls, calves, lambs, bees, geese, dogs, cattle, swine, horses, company, visiting, talking, trading, buying, selling, and laying up money against a wet day. What! a "wet day" for Madam Bacon? Impossible! Well, that was her way of talking.

It is evident that such a smart, energetic creature as Madam Bacon must, of course, be well fitted to have the care of our friends, the paupers, and that she, if any body, would be able to draw out their energies in a way that would secure at least the aforesaid twenty per cent. And we must say, she was not wanting in this respect. She was out and in among them all day long, and evening too, from five o'clock till nine or ten ; and it was a very rare thing indeed to see one of them who could work idle.

Here was the widow Prescott knitting, or heeling and darning stockings or old clothes, or again picking over beans, dried apples, rags, or dampening clothes to iron. Here was Mag Davis winding yarn, getting ready the dinner, scrubbing, night and morning milking "*her cow*," as the mooley was facetiously called ; Roxy ditto, and making beds for Madam Bacon. Mrs. Jane Huggins, with her two or three little children, was making rags for a carpet, or mending pants, vests, and coats for the paupers. Molly Weaknis was scouring knives, or brushing the rooms. In the fall of the year, all hands often passed the evenings and part of the day paring, quar-

tering, and stringing apples to dry for market. During the day the men worked at the cider-press ; in hay time they assisted in making and securing hay ; and so in harvest time they bound up sheaves ; they planted, hoed, and gathered corn and potatoes. Men and women often worked in the garden, and kept it free from weeds. More than half the whole number could do some work—perhaps full three-fourths—and a good many were able to work more or less vigorously all day. No good farmer would give one of them the full price of a vigorous day-laborer for his help ; but some could earn a good twenty per cent., to say the least, on the cost of the whole. Abraham was sure of that ; and so was his wife.

Nothing was truer, as Mr. Haddock, Mr. Phillips, and Mr. Rodman said, from Mr. Bacon's success, than that the paupers could, under more advantageous circumstances, earn the whole cost of their support, and be every way better taken care of, and happier. And they brought the subject to the notice of the town, and argued it repeatedly. They even offered to be responsible for the results ; but the time had not come. Their propositions were not received.

Abraham, as we have said, had them in charge two years. He had made all the necessary arrangements to take them a third, when he was most unexpectedly under-bid by a close-calculating, rummy sort of a man over in the south-east part of the town—a man in rather embarrassed circumstances, but a great swaggerer, and particularly strenuous for the paupers, being a merciful and humane manager. This man was Jacob Siddleton ; and as he had but a small house for his own family, and still smaller for the new comers, they lived, while in his hands, stowed away in poorly-

ventilated rooms, and in a very damp, unwholesome, and inconvenient way altogether. Neither Mr. nor Mrs. Siddleton cared to set them about any work, except to mend and wash their own clothes, cut and burn their fuel, and prepare their own meals. These, even, were sometimes performed under embarrassments and difficulties, as the Israelites in Egypt once experienced difficulty in the tale of bricks. At Siddleton's six of the paupers died. Some were down with the scurvy a part of the time, and all of them grew lifeless and wan while there.

Mr. and Mrs. Siddleton's great and merciful design was to keep them as quiet as possible. Mrs. Siddleton sometimes sat down among them and showed them pictures, and read little stories for their amusement. Again, she would show them her cast-off caps, and frocks, and trinkets of various hues and fashions, and talk of other days, and of what she and Mr. Siddleton were going to do when they were rich. When any of them were sick she prepared water gruel, and catnip and motherwort and elderberry tea for them ; and if they were hurt she melted tallow and rubbed it on the wounds, advising them always to moderate their diet, to eat simple food, never to crowd the stomach, and only to allow themselves the use of nourishing food.

Notwithstanding all these particulars, they were never a very lively and happy company ; and they frequently felt the gnawings of hunger. They desired changes of raiment and more comfortable rooms. But Mrs. Siddleton told them the Saviour of sinners, when on earth, had not where to lay *His* head ; and they must allow that they were in a far more desirable condition than he was ; and that as to raiment, the same Saviour had said, "Take no thought for the body what ye shall put

on." "The world," said she, "is all gone mad after fashions and expensive clothing. It is a real shame and disgrace to this Christian age, that so much extravagance is practiced by ladies and gentlemen; it makes no difference whether rich or poor, white or black. It is only yesterday I saw a smart-looking, elegantly-dressed colored girl, swinging and tiptoeing along to church, dressed in expensive *moire antique* silk, of a very high and splendid color; and directly after another colored girl, with a modern summer *white-fringed cape*, and her companion with one of our fashionable cheap grey *dusters*. Thus they go—all following Fashion, wherever she leads the way. Now it is better to appear dressed in poor clothing as a rebuke of the age in which we live—and it is especially commendable in the poor, to feel contented with their lot, and to avoid all useless repinings at the appointments of Divine Providence!"

In this truly judicious and practical Christian way, with attentions given to the spiritual rather than to the merely physical, perishing, and temporal nature of things, Mrs. Siddleton daily held communications with the paupers that were under her roof. She gave them line upon line, precept upon precept, and evinced a very intimate knowledge of the Word of Truth; and so she was regarded in town as a very exemplary, wise, and Christian guardian for the poor folks. But they, the paupers, while they heard her instructions, and received into their minds the comforting words of Scripture, which she, again and again, informed them were for their special support and consolation—"to the poor the Gospel is preached"—found themselves often condoling in heart with unhappy "ESAU, who, for one morsel of meat, *sold his birthright!*"

## CHAPTER XXXII.

THE Paupers at Auction. To many a one there is a charm in the very sound of the word "Auction." And so at auction decent people often buy those goods they neither need nor really desire. But they find a comfort in having bought them "*low—at auction!*" Much good may they do them. Rag, Tag and Bob-tail, are often bolted off with Good, Better, Best, at the Sales: so one bids off the former for the sake of the latter. When one takes lot ALL of the Town's Chattels, he of course takes the good and the bad. Contrary to the usual notion, however, the *good* paupers in such a trade are, the weak-ready-to-die-off class; the *bad*, the healthy, strong, good-livers! Kind Providence! save thou us and ours from this block.

EARLY in the fall every year there is held the public, or town-meeting, to hear the report of the selectmen, and of all the other officers of the town. Then also, accounts are examined, new officers are elected, money is appropriated, a customary tax is voted for the expenses of the year, and all other business is done that circumstances seem to call for. Such a meeting came off in Crampton.

Esq. Ben Stout was appointed moderator of the meeting, an office he would not have failed of for the best coat he ever wore, one of which he was always sure when party lines run at all close, but which he sometimes declined, after having been appointed, for the gratification of some personal friend. On the present occasion the Squire said that he would willingly serve the town as chairman, for he had so long been made to occupy that position, one ever gratifying to his ambition, that he probably knew as well as—most—men—(*not all*) among them what was wanted, and doing, he

could—he—presumed, facilitate the business before the public, and so procure an early adjournment. But he regretted to say it—he said it with reluctance—he *was growing old!* His sight, his hearing, his activity, were not as formerly. He regretted to say these things. It was much to the mortification of his mind—anxious as he was “to serve and oblige his fellow-citizens.” The people all looked straight at him. Most of them had their hats on, and were standing in groups upon the floor of the Town Hall. Some of them were aged, gray-haired men; lame and feeble others; a large portion men of middle age, strong and healthy. They looked, we say, straight at him. Then they looked at each other, and some renewed their tobacco; others passed round their snuff-boxes. A few whispered and smiled, and said—“The old Squire isn’t going to give it up, is he?”

“Oh! no, ha! ha! He’s on the old track now!”

“He’ll come up directly,” said one.

The people kept quiet, looking straight at him, as we have already said twice.

The Squire at this point took snuff from Charles Caldwell, Esq.’s box, kindly held out, and concluded as follows:

“But—my fellow townsmen—(*heigho!*) it has never been my way of life to cringe for a little pain, or to shirk off responsibility. If, in the judgment of my fellow citizens who have given me their flattering suffrages, not only as their chairman and moderator of this meeting, but often as their representative in the legislative halls of the State—if, I repeat it, they in their judgment deem me yet serviceable to them——”

“I told you so,” said the speaker just referred to.

“Oh, yes,” said the first speaker; “the Squire is *always* ‘this side up.’”

"He is on the gaining tack now you see," said the second speaker.

"And especially if they demand it by their vote, I will wave my own preferences and most heartfelt desires, and to the best of my abilities serve them *now and as long as I live !*"

A tremendous "hurrah !" followed this extraordinary good hit of the Squire's, and that gentleman never before entered on a public duty of this nature with a more decidedly genuine feeling of personal gratification.

The Squire called for the reading of the town records of last meeting, then in order called up the other business—the reports of selectmen, overseers of the poor, town listers, grand jury reports, school society's report, and listened to debates on this, that, and the other matter, as they were offered, with a clear head and an impartial mind, presiding as usual with dignity and firmness.

But as we are mainly interested in the affairs of the paupers, we shall not particularize on any other part of the business than such as had a bearing on them—for example, the report of the overseer of the poor.

This document was drawn up with some care, and signed by Squire Ben Stout, first selectman of the town, and by Ezekiel Harris, second selectman. There was also a minority report, signed by Erastus Corning, third selectman. The two documents were read. The former represented the whole number of actual paupers on the town during the year, for the whole time or part of it, at twenty-one persons, and beside these there were a few individuals, in a state of necessity or dependence, who required some assistance. There were three young children on the town, one an infant left by—somebody, and the town would be compelled to support it. The *parents* of the other children were very infirm and shift

less. The balance, of thirteen individuals, were adults, most of them aged. Of the whole number there had deceased during the year but six individuals, which might be considered extraordinary when their diseased and weakened physical state was remembered, were, if not in a great measure accounted for by the fact of their very merciful and humane treatment, especially on the part of Mrs. Siddleton, who seemed to have done all that a pious matron could do to render the unfortunate poor of the town comfortable and happy. And the report concluded with a resolution of the two overseers above named, recommending the town to confide the care of them still to the same hands, in case nobody else made better terms!

This report was received. But it was severely criticised and cut up by Squire Ketchum of the town, who had been quite a thorn of late years in the sides of the old management of the paupers. Between him and Lawyer Tools there was a good deal of sparring. Mr. Haddock also referred to some of the cases reported as deceased during the year, and inquired if there had been "five dollars spent for medical advice and assistance for the whole of them?" He knew one of the paupers to have actually died of starvation in his room, being unwilling to come down—a young man of ruined property and character, mortified, sick, and half-deranged by his position, he shut himself in his room—"and *I know*," said Haddock, with tremendous energy, "that Mr. and Mrs. Siddleton did not send for a doctor, nor for any assistance whatever in his case, but they said, 'if he will make a fool of himself, and not eat when he can, let him starve.' And, sir, *starve* he did. He was found in a feeble and dying state by Mr. Corning, your third select-man, when on a visit to the poor-house, and who was



compelled to burst open his door before he could reach him, no difficult matter it is true, for the door was hung on leather hinges, and fastened with a stick. This young man was, as you well know, left an orphan with a large estate ; and he spent it most lavishly among wild and dissipated companions, till want and absolute penury compelled him to beg for bread—and among the dead of our poor the past year is this young man, only twenty-eight years of age, ruined, forsaken, left to starve.”\*

A dozen men started for “the floor.”

“Mr. Siddleton has the floor!” cried the chairman. Now, Mr. Siddleton was not a very smooth speaker, because he had not received the advantages of early education as Mr. Haddock evidently had. But he was a very earnest, decided man, and could make as long a talk as any body. In the present instance “he hoped,” he said, “that the majority’s report would be put right through and through, for it was a first rate town-paper any way. And it didn’t find unnecessary fault with folks neither. It was a *considerate* document, signed by Squire Stout and Mr. Harris, men he reckoned who knew which way to look for Sunday. He guess’d the whole town thought so too! As for starving Bill Scudder, that was all a regular piece of hunkerism! Bill was as fat when he died as a hog. He got wilful, re-

\* We copy the following, as we found it, from the Fremont Journal, Ohio, April 10, 1857.—AUTHOR.

“A WARNING TO FAST YOUNG MEN.—John Miller, aged twenty-eight years, died at Indianapolis on Friday. The *Journal* gives a brief history of his sad career : He was born in Dayton, Ohio, left an orphan with a large estate, and to his own guidance—became a ‘fast young man,’ and rapidly spent a fortune which was counted by tens of thousands. He kept a circle of dashing young fellows about him until his money was gone, who then deserted and left him. He sought Indianapolis as a home, and there in some menial capacity, lived for a time, and died in a strange garret, friendless and alone.—Fremont Journal, April 10, 1857.”

fused to eat ; we carried food to his door ; we called him down, but the young scamp got mortified and sort of crazy—and, your honor—what could a body do ? For my part I was glad when the poor fellow died, because he just grew worse and worse, and he didn't want to live any longer any how. And that's all, your honor, there is about starving any body !”

Lawyer Tools got the floor. This gentleman said he didn't rise to make a speech, but simply to say that the town poor always made more fuss in their annual meeting than every and all other things combined. He hoped that some gentlemen who loved to make capital out of the subject and to roll up votes for their political party, would make as much as they possibly could out of this “ *starving case*,” (ha ! ha !) for it was not likely they would soon have any thing quite as good to work at. (*Applause.*) One thing he especially desired, viz. : that these “ croakers,” he called them, should bid off the poor for themselves, and just keep them for a year or two as they thought others should ; then, he thought they could better give advice and more justly find fault.”

“ Just so !” “ Good !” “ Give it to 'um, Tools !” went round the hall.

Then the justice said, “ Order, gentlemen—please come to order. Mr. Ketchum has the floor.”

Lawyer Ketchum said he was always emulous of every good thing he ever saw in his brother Tools ; and so, like him, would preface his remarks by saying he did not rise to make a speech. He would simply say that the town poor always would be a bone of contention to the town until they were disposed of in a proper manner. They were human beings, and required humane and proper attention. They did not usually

receive it, as he believed, nor would they be apt to under the present system of locating them. They wanted more attention to their common daily little ills and discomforts, good nursing, some medical attention, good shelter, warm rooms, clean and respectable garments—"

"Take them yourself," cried a voice in the crowd.

"Let Haddock take them," said another.

"Order, gentlemen," said the moderator.

"I should like to ask the gentleman," said Lawyer Tools, "if he would consent to have the care of these people, and do for them what he proposes for others to do, for even eight hundred dollars a year!"

"Good!" "Go it, Tools!" exclaimed voices.

"In reply to brother Tool's inquiry," said Mr. Ketchum, "I have to answer, that as I am not a married man yet, following as usual the example of my elder brother in the profession——"

"Good! Hurrah for Ketchum and Tools!" cried the whole house.

"Regular old bachelors!" said some.

"Genuine stuff, those chaps!" said others—"ha! ha! ha!"

"I couldn't, Mr. Moderator, under these circumstances, make the engagement proposed. But further, it is a little out of my usual line of business, let the case be as it might; and then, again, and decidedly, *it would violate all my principles to take them at any price!*"

"Good!" said Mr. Haddock and his friends.

(Coughing, stamping, and some hissing on the other side.)

"Order, gentlemen!" said the moderator, looking over his spectacles.

Much opposition to the reading of the minority report was made, and with difficulty it was got in. Finally it

was read, but it went no further. It represented the poor as suffering many privations and much needless humiliation as they were now kept, and recommended that the town adopt the new system of purchasing a town farm, and placing the poor there, as in a comfortable and respectable home, where all due attention would be paid to their wants, and the town delivered from the ignominy of selling them as so many worthless slaves at auction—*actually to the lowest bidder!*

Mr. Haddock moved to accept the report. Mr. Phillips seconded the motion. The moderator put it to vote, and it was voted not to accept, by a very large majority.

By-and-bye the question came up for the disposal of the poor for the ensuing year.

Many persons were in favor of Mr. Siddleton having them at six hundred dollars. Mr. Siddleton said he would take them at that, although he couldn't afford it. His wife and he labored for their good from morning till night, and he really thought that Mrs. Siddleton's health was seriously affected by her great attention to their temporal and spiritual comfort.

There were other bidders, however.

"Six hundred dollars! gentlemen, is Mr. Siddleton's offer. He will take the paupers and give them suitable provision for a year for six hundred dollars! Six hundred dollars for the town paupers for one year, *going!* Does any body say less than *six hundred?*"

"*Five hundred and seventy-five!*" said Abraham Bacon.

"Whew!—you," said Siddleton. "Whew, man! you cant——" (Now Bacon was known by his skillful management to have made out of his two years' contract a thousand dollars!)

"Gentlemen," said the moderator, "we have a bid

from another responsible man—of five hundred and seventy-five dollars—Mr. Abraham Bacon—knows all about it—five hundred seventy-five, *going* ! Now's your chance, Siddleton ; can't be helped ; the town paupers of Crampton for one year *five hundred seventy-five*——"

" *Seventy* !" cried Siddleton in desperation—(Siddleton was known to have lost money by his contract.)—The people stared !

" *Sixty-five* !" said Bacon.

" *Sixty* !" said John Stoddard.

" Five hundred and sixty dollars ! ha ! ha ! " said the moderator. " *Down they go* ! What's a loss to you, gentlemen, is gain to us, ha ! ha ! ha ! " and every body shouted—(no ! some there were who could not shout—" ha ! ha ! ha ! ")

" Five hundred and fifty-five !" said Siddleton.

" Five hundred and fifty," quickly retorted John Stoddard—and as every body refused to go below him, John Stoddard got the contract.

This individual was a lame, and a rather significant looking piece of humanity, walking always with a staff, and using constantly a good deal of tobacco ; but there was a sharp twinkle to his little left eye, that spoke more than words, and volumes of books, about his true character. It seemed to say, " Now, I've thought this thing over myself—eh ? Didn't think of *that*, did ye, eh ? It's all put down in black and white, dollar for dollar, dime for dime, penny for penny, eh ? Did you know *that*, say ? Don't be uneasy. We've got our thumb on it, and it's there, eh ? Did you know *that*, hey ? " He was a remarkably close calculating and shrewd man.—He was never known to have made a poor bargain. He always appeared to come off best in all his trades, even in his pious ones, for though John always bid off a high

priced slip in church, and seemed to be shifting his ground and looking towards the benevolent and easy side of things, i. e., spending money rather too freely—he was shrewd enough to know that he could always rent or sell such a slip at a good profit ; that half or two-thirds of it would rent to some body who wanted a smart slip, for very nearly the cost of the whole, and so he at the very smallest cost maintain a high stand in the sanctuary. He went to the town-meeting with his mind made up to bid in the paupers at any sum over five hundred dollars—and so he made fifty dollars on the speculation at the outset.

Mr. Siddleton *was vexed*. He was galled. He knew that he lost money last year, but he had determined to recover it this. (The paupers did not know of that determination, poor souls !) Mr. Siddleton knew that his wife would feel bitterly disappointed. She wanted to do more for them than ever. Her attention had been fully aroused to their spiritual wants ; so many of them necessarily die off every year, she intended to be more faithful to them for the year to come, and endeavor to eradicate from their minds and hearts all love of the world, its passing and vain shows, its fashions, pleasures, indulgences and desires. He knew that she proposed to follow up vigorously a course of instruction in these matters that would eminently fit them to die, no matter how soon, and Mr. Siddleton thought he had good and just occasion to feel bad.

So he went among the people and made several insinuations that if they meant anything—meant that in his opinion John Stoddard was a hard case, and just about no man at all. There were some who thought so too ; while there were those who had the good sense to believe that the paupers would be as well off with Stod-

dard as with Siddleton. Mr. Siddleton didn't know these latter sentiments, and so he continued to express his opinions as freely as at the first.

There were several persons who stood as ready as Siddleton to bid on the paupers at six hundred, or at seven hundred dollars, and these of course thought, if it was not folly in John Stoddard to bid them in at five hundred and fifty dollars, it would have been in them. *He* himself, shrewd as he was known to be, was rather regarded as "sold," and a good many told him so ; but every body noticed a decided twinkling of Johnnie's little eye whenever the thing was cast at him, and they began to think he had something in the wind that every body didn't exactly comprehend.

After a time, Siddleton and Stoddard happened to fall in with each other as they were walking here and there in the hall and in front of it, and Siddleton slapping him on the shoulder said, " Well, you've got a tough job of it, neighbor Stoddard ! I'm good on that in a bet of one hundred dollars ; ha ! ha ! ha !" and Siddleton shook the bank bills in his face.

" I dare say it's a tough one, neighbor Siddleton ; you found it so, now didn't ye, eh ?"

" Yes, blast me if I didn't ! I'm mighty glad the stuff's off my hands—it'll go hard with you, Stoddard ; come, plank us a hundred on a bet of that—eh ?"

" Oh, I don't want to lose money too fast, neighbor Siddleton. My money comes too hard for that. Now, with your experience you know it's perfectly safe to bet a hundred dollars ! You know I shall lose it, so what's the use, eh ?" and twinkle went the little eye.

" Ay ! ay ! I see where you'd hide, old fellow ; plank the money if you dare."

" Oh, no, I guess not, Siddleton."

"Try him, try him," said Lawyer Tools.

"No, I guess not. You see it's a tough, tight squeeze to make any thing at best."

"And be humane and merciful," said Siddleton.

"That's it exactly," said Stoddard; "it's too bad to bet on the poor devils, and to be under temptation to screw them if you don't come out good towards the end, eh? (*Twinkle, twinkle.*)

"That's the best thing I have heard to-day," said Lawyer Ketchum to Mr. Haddock, standing by.

"Well, it is a sensible matter-of-fact remark," replied that gentleman.

"Then you dare'snt bet any how—there's a hundred," said Siddleton, throwing five twenty dollar bills on the table. Stoddard pulled out his well-filled pocket-book, deliberately opened it, and laying a hundred dollar note on the table, put the pocket-book, with a thousand untouched dollars in it, back into his pocket.

"There," said he, "if I don't make three hundred and fifty dollars out of this job and treat them as well as ever you did, in the opinion of the selectmen of Crampton, you may have *that*—so put up your hundred dollars, Siddleton; you may want them, and, Lawyer Tools, just take care of that money till the year comes round, eh? (*Twinkle, flash and twinkle.*)

"Very well," said the lawyer, picking up the bill. The crowd fell back as Stoddard walked away, and Siddleton, ashamed and vexed, and discomfited, could hardly tell what to do or say. At length, as the people said, "take up the money, Siddleton; he's neck or nothing, you see, and if he fails you get the money."

"Yes, but it wouldn't be very honorable to take it, I think, under just these circumstances."



"A pretty good thought *that*, too," said Lawyer Ketchum to Mr. Haddock.

"A very just one, a good, cool, second thought," he replied.

"It's 'honorable' enough," said some one ; "if he's got himself into a scrape let him get out."

"Yes," said another, "and he's underbid you and got away the job."

"So he has!" said Siddleton, "I forgot that;" and without more ado he put the money back into his purse.

"Halloa there, Stoddard!" cried he, as he went out of the hall in front of the building, "come over early to-morrow morning—before breakfast if you can, and take off the c——! for they've cost me enough already."

Mr. Stoddard, leaning on his staff, walked away to his wagon, backed out his two heavy horses, cramped the wheels to get into it by the aid of the step, and seating himself in an easy sort of a way, turned the heads of his five hundred dollar nags towards home.

There was one man at this town-meeting, blind of one eye, lame, poorly dressed, and evidently in reduced worldly circumstances, who took no part in the debates, and said few words to any persons present—a man on the down-hill of life—none other than Captain Isaac Bunce. But who can help it—who protect himself against vicissitudes when it was long time ago said, and has been ever found in the experience and observation of many, to have been truly, though in a dead language said, "*sic mundi, gloria transit*?" Never mind church members and widows, and little boys and girls, nor the sick and aged. They all belong to the same class—the "*sic mundi*" class. Down with them. The lowest bidder gets them. How much? Must be sold!!!

## CHAPTER XXXIII.

THE Ministers get hold of it. Let us see what they think.

JOHN STODDARD had been a close observer of the manner pursued by Abraham Bacon with the paupers, and was satisfied that he could employ them still more profitably than that gentleman had done. He cultivated a good farm of soft, easy river land, and had gone considerably into the raising of garden seeds for market. It was work that required a good deal of attention and many hands, but was light, clean kind of work for the greater part—such as boys, girls, women, and feeble persons might do. There were the roots of the different vegetables to be set out in the spring, and after this the hoeing, weeding, and care of the growing shoots. There were also seeds of annual plants to be sown, and care used in their growth and ripening. In the fall there were gathered the seeds of carrots, parsnips, beets, and the like were thrashed out on the barn floor. Then came the winnowing processes and packing in barrels; after which they were safely kept till a late period of the year, when the cold drove the people in doors. And what a busy and useful employment for all the paupers who were able to do any thing, to measure out and fill the little paper bags, previously prepared, with the seeds, especially for the little ragged children of the establishment!

*In short, by labors of this kind, without materially*

altering the external condition of the paupers, John Stoddard cleared on his seeds this year over a thousand dollars. Siddleton lost the expected hundred dollar note ; for Stoddard showed his bills and expenses, demonstrating to everybody's conviction that he had fairly made on his poor-house contract three hundred and fifty dollars.

The eyes of a good many people began to open about this time as to the advantage of a new poor-house system ; but for some years still the opposition to it defeated every measure that was brought forward. Now there were enough money-loving persons in the town who wanted the help of the paupers in their different sorts of work—light work which they could do—and they would not let Israel go on this account. Said they, "If there is any money to be made out of the paupers, why give it to the town? No ; we will make and keep it ourselves."

The close of Stoddard's year marked the fifth year of James Sherman's removal from Captain Bunce's, and the period of his entering college. Four years from that time he graduated, acknowledged by his classmates among the highest of their class. It was a proud day for Mr. and Mrs. Rodman when he came forward at Commencement and delivered an earnest, soul-thrilling oration on the *Injustice of Man to his Fellow-man*, stating and arguing the principle, and proving all his points by references to the Scriptures, and by apt quotations from the writings of the great poets and philosophers. And there, too, sat Alice in her loveliness, now sixteen years of age, between whom and James there had been from childhood a spirit of sympathy, ripening and unfolding into the tender and absorbing emotion of love. How often have they pursued their studies together by the

same evening lamp! How often roved together by the brook-side, and along the green pasture, and threaded the mazes of the wood! And older growing, and more fearful and tender and careful, how difficult it is to each to think or speak or move, without the consciousness that the other is affected by it! The orphan Alice and the orphan James, in their peculiar station, could hardly fail of a deep interest in each other; and as their characters developed rich veins of thought and principle, great love of truth, and extraordinary benevolence, their guardians were gratified to observe their mutual attachment.

Mr. Rodman had ever cultivated in James a spirit of compassion towards the unfortunate—his own early history, rising ever before his mind, being brought out to illustrate his meaning. James never ceased to feel the deepest interest in the welfare of the poor sufferers among whom his early life had been passed; and Alice would sit hours listening to him as he portrayed the condition of her father and himself, and that of all the rest of the degraded and forgotten paupers. She could never fully realize, however, either her father's or her mother's trials. She did, indeed, just remember the dreadful shipwreck, and the long, cold, dark, and fearful walk in the snow the evening when a ragged boy met them, and guided them to the shelter of the poor-house.

And so they gathered up in repeated conversations the history of their early life, and kept fresh in memory the miseries of those who were still in the house of poverty.

"If I am ever able," said James, "I will make one person in that old poor-house company better off than she now is. I will put Mrs. Prescott in a better home. *She is too good a saint to languish and die there.*"

"It would be a happiness," said Alice, "to relieve them all."

"Yes, indeed, and they will find relief yet. Lawyer Ketchum tells me there is a growing interest in the subject, and that they hope to carry through the very next town-meeting a project of relief."

"Well, won't that be fine, if they succeed? Now, I do hope they will, don't you, James?"

"I do. Yes, it is a great injustice."

"Oh, yes, James, I knew what you were thinking of when your oration came on. And a good, a grand speech it was too—and how every body listened—I saw the attention."

"Ah, Alice, you hit me right in the face and eyes, see how I color up! It must have been a great speech, truly!"

"It was the greatest speech that was made, and every body said so. I was as proud of you as I could be."

"Now, Alice, you are just quizzing me; I don't think it was a remarkable good oration any way. The *subject* of it, I know, is interesting to our minds; but I think I never was so conscious before of failing to bring out ideas that were suited to the theme."

"Dear me, James, I never saw so many ideas before put into so small a space, and the audience looked at you as though ready to devour both you and your words!"

"Well, I declare, Alice, I won't say any thing more—you have completely blown me up, I am afraid unless you tie some bags of sand to me, that I shall sail away, *a la balloon*."

"Oh! dear. Well, you may go—sail away, balloon! But I hope you will make a safe descent somewhere and bring back the balloon."

James was now entered as a student at law in Mr. Ketchum's office, and applied himself vigorously to his new studies.

In the meantime, Mr. Rodman met with the clergy of his district and association, at their annual session for business, and by previous appointment read before them an essay on the subject of pauperism. The subject had been introduced, and once or twice warmly discussed before, and it had led many of the ministers to make inquiry and look into the matter at home. These investigations always resulted in opening more clearly their minds to the abuses of the pauper system as the same was practiced among them. They saw that the paupers, fallen from what grade soever of society they might, were almost totally forgotten and neglected ; that they were an incumbrance to the town ; that they were inhumanly treated, and regarded as beyond the ordinary pale of Christian benevolence ; that on these accounts, the idea prevailed over the community that there was nothing so dreadful as absolute poverty, necessitating one to receive the grudging charity of the town.

Mr. Rodman, in his report to the ministers, said—

“ It was announced by the Saviour of the world that his coming to our earth was to seek and to save the lost. He made repeated allusions to the condition of poverty, drawing some of his most thrilling illustrations from it ; as of the poor woman and her offerings in the temple ; as of the beggar named Lazarus ; as of the impotent man at the pool Bethesda ; as of the occupants of the hedges and stragglers by the highway sides ; as of the sick and suffering in prison. And his own history teaches that he identified himself when here with the poor as a class, never seeking to be known as or called *one of the great, noble, rich*. His Gospel is an annun-

ciation of mercy to the poor in spirit, and is a word of salvation for the rearing, elevating, ennobling, and blessing the poor and miserable beings of our world. It is for salvation to the ends of the earth—no more happily beneficial for me than for my children—for me than for my servants. *'To the poor the Gospel is preached.'*

Here then is the universal Christian platform. Society in all parts of the world now needs, and society in every past age has been in want of it, to act aright. As men have swerved, and as they now do swerve from it, they fall off into error.

We must receive it as *our* platform, or suffer the evil consequences ourselves.

It is one of the striking characteristics of the Saviour that while he was on the earth he went about doing good, healing all manner of sicknesses and diseases among the people, and carrying consolatory messages to the poor ; but in our day it is too far characteristic of us that we go about on our own business, seldom visiting the prisons, penitentiaries, hospitals and poor-houses, condoling with the wretched in them, drawing out words of true consolation from the Gospel of Christ, while we assiduously regard and court the favor of the rich and titled. Conformed ourselves in all the ways of fashion and modes of life, to the gay and thoughtless and busy ones by whom we are surrounded, we forget, and if not forgetting it, fail to exemplify the self-denial of the Son of God—making ourselves even objects of envy and hopeless aspiration to the poor ones by the way-side, in the hedges, at the pools, in hospitals, alms-houses, and prisons ! Can this be right ?

The Gospel has produced very great elevation of the human family where it has been and is now preached. Its refining touch has put away or weakened the super-

stition, cannibalism, paganism of the world, and it has done a great work in liberating the human mind from all error of doctrine and practice, from falsehood, bigotry, degradation, evil and corrupt habits.

But it has not yet, by any means, made man perfect. It has not yet reproduced the scenes and innocence of Paradise. The present attainment is full of error, if not in theory—in practice. Nominal Christian people live in the constant exercises of pride, self-love, vanity, pleasure, worldliness, etc., in some one or many of their forms. There are few—very few—if any, who are true in all things, meek, patient, forgiving, benevolent, as was the Son of God, as know they in their own consciences, they should be.

At the present time, society acknowledges the Gospel idea of benevolence towards the poor, and there are laws that bind us to the performance of this duty. We have our hospitals, our alms houses, homes of refuge, poor houses, etc. But private charity comes in to the aid of the unfortunate, in many cases, or the relief of the State would often be so indiscriminating that the evil and the good mingled together, would seethe into a measure of corruption.

The public provision for the support of *paupers*, on which matter I chiefly speak, is, a provision to supply all the actually poor people of each town in a State with necessary and suitable temporal relief, it being ascertained that there was a positive certainty of a class of citizens without friends to help them, without health, without thrift, without strength—a needy, but not strictly criminal class—a fallen, impoverished class, in danger of starving and of previous great suffering, to the reproach of the State unless provided for.

*From a very early period, therefore, there has existed*



a State law securing the poor the benefit of town support.

The number of actual paupers in a town, who have no property in their own right, is generally conceded as from five to eight for every one thousand inhabitants. The number is probably much greater than this in the large cities, many of whom are destitute foreigners—often the pauperage of Europe sent here to save their support at home.

In our own country towns, these paupers are the wrecks of society among us, representatives of ourselves ; they are what we may become. A town pauper is one (*any* one) whose residence in any town is such as to give him a settlement there ; who cannot support himself, and needs and receives relief from the selectmen of the town or overseers ; although it does not follow that he must always remain a pauper.

A State pauper is one in a similar condition of necessity, but who has no such settlement in the State. Natives of one town lose their residence and settlement there, when they gain a new one in some other town by living in it a given number of years—usually six years. It often happens that persons have no settlement in the State.

The law obliges each town to support its paupers ; but it does not direct the mode. (In some of the States it does, and then the poor of a county are all sent to a common centre, called the county poor-house, or farm.) Every town in New England is empowered to build a poor-house. If, however, the people think they can support the paupers “cheaper” without it, they have the right to do so.\*

↓ This freedom leads to their disposal in various forms.

\* Mass. law ; D. B. Esq.'s correspondence with A. W. H.

They are sometimes kept in comfortable quarters at the town farm, so called, which the town, by tax or otherwise, finds the money to buy, and there they are permitted many personal conveniences, as at a quiet, well-ordered home, and are employed about the premises in various work and occupations proper to their condition and useful to their health, invariably lessening to the town their actual expense. And beside all this, it gives the suffering ones and the aged the proper and constant care of a nurse, places them in clean and warm rooms, provides for them good food, and in giving them a home, elevates them to the position of living, thinking, true human beings. There will often be found in these happy homes of the poor from fifteen to twenty-five persons. I say 'happy homes,' using the phrase in a liberal sense, for they elevate the institution into the lists of Gospel or Christian institutions.

When they are not kept in this manner, they are sometimes supported in small companies, or gangs here and there about town, as the overseers can make contracts with different persons at so much per week. Then again, they divide the sexes, contracting with one or more individuals to support the females, and with another party to support the males. Not unfrequently they contract for the support of one in a family, so variously do they attend to this business, and secure the end of providing for them through a year.

But the most outrageous and reprehensible manner—one that has become very common, although not universal—is the selling of the paupers at the town-meeting, or soon after, by the overseers, to the lowest bidder, who takes them off the hands of the town, and supports them as he best can—working them as he pleases, clothing and feeding, nursing and burying them as he *thinks he can afford to do.*

This is a common practice. The lowest bidder is one who takes them at the lowest rate possible, after having been run in his bids by rival speculators in the stock, and is, further, one not usually a strictly conscientious, Christian man—the principles of such an one forbidding him to engage in the sale, even temporarily, of ‘his own flesh.’ Consequently, they are in the hands of money-makers, close calculators, worldly men, who, having bid them off at a very low price, feel justified in keeping them accordingly.

And it is estimated that a shrewd business sort of a man will manage to keep fifteen paupers a year at an aggregate cost of only one hundred and fifty or two hundred dollars !

As it frequently happens that under *this* system they are supported year after year for three or five years by the same person, he comes to regard them as his creatures, to do with just as he feels inclined. He is sometimes a very hard master, and then their condition is one of extreme suffering, danger and death ; at other times he is one of peculiar mercenariness, and then they go about almost starved. Then he is thriftless and rummy, and they fall into the same ruinous course.

As thus managed, it is purely a selfish and unchristian institution. Of course, the paupers, bid off on speculation by a man formerly interested in the matter to make money out of it, other people see little of it, and have comparatively no interest in the management. They feel no obligation to remember the town's poor ; let the person who has taken, or bought them for the year, see that they are taken care of according to his contract !

Now, the contract may read well enough and be explicit enough, but the town knows that if an individual bids off the poor at a low rate, he will of course keep

them on very poor and coarse diet, and provide for them the most meagre accommodations. The only reason why this system has maintained its hold among the people here at the North is, that a majority of the voters, often a small, sometimes a large one, have regarded it as the cheapest system. Simply to save a few dollars in the taxes, they have overlooked every other consideration, especially the inhumanity of it. They have not consulted at all the feelings of the poor themselves, who have been sometimes persons of sensibility and virtue. They have gone in opposition to Christian principles—often Christian vows.

You will find this to have been a prevalent custom in New England, says a friend who resides in a neighboring town, writing to me some of these facts. 'About the time of my being appointed overseer of the poor, along with the selectmen, complaints began to arise against the high rates of taxes for the support of the poor. It costs too much to keep them—we won't board them about here and there any longer, but will sell them off in a lump, and so they did. By a small majority they carried a vote to sell the poor—not to the highest bidder, as our southern brethren sell their poor—but to the lowest, i. e., to him, who for the smallest sum, would keep them a year and clear the town of all expenses on their account. This,' he says, 'was a course as revolting to myself and to others, *as it was mortifying to the poor themselves*. But a majority ruled and continued the practice, thinking it the cheapest course. It was repeatedly proposed by the few, to purchase a farm and put it in proper condition to give the paupers a home. But this was uniformly opposed by the many.'\*

\* O. S., Esq., B—vt.

In the town of Crampton we have an average of fifteen paupers a year. Of these, ten are aged persons, male and female, from fifty to eighty years of age ; some of them were reared in the best society and enjoyed a fine reputation. Circumstances, I cannot now detail, have made them poor. Their last years are periods of misery often indescribable. The men and women have little separate accommodations, and the vulgar, at pleasure, offend the modest and delicate. The younger portion mingle with the old and learn their evil ways. Together they go on in idleness, uncleanness and vicious ways—often little children are found there with the aged, the vulgar and wicked.

We have had one State pauper, a Mr. Boyce, a talented author, a foreigner among our poor, with a half demented intellect. He was removed by a friendly neighbor. His wife and child came from England to find him. Shocked beyond endurance at finding him as she did, the wife went into a decline herself, and both husband and wife died leaving an orphan daughter who has been reared in my own family as an adopted daughter, and is now in her seventeenth year.

We have now actually as a town pauper, an aged widow of one of the deacons of the church, a woman of remarkable scriptural knowledge, and of good sense on many subjects, who ought not to have been sent there, nor to be confined there a day longer. We are daily looking for the time when Captain Isaac Bunce, formerly the keeper of the town poor for several years, will be himself in that condition. I have, as many of you know, educated a young man from there, a relation of my wife, whose parents were of respectable families in *this town*. The young man has been through college. *and will, I think, make his mark upon the world.*

I shall close this essay, already too long, when I have mentioned some of the civil rights that paupers lose.

In the first place, *They are not in all cases allowed to vote.*

In the second place, *They cannot act on a jury.*

In the third place, *They cannot, as paupers, own any property.*

In the fourth place, They cannot direct in what manner they shall be supported.

In the fifth place, They cannot choose their own keepers.

In the sixth place, They cannot direct the care of their children, as

(a) whether they shall live with them.

(b) " " " go to school.

(c) " " " be bound out as apprentices.

(d) *when* " " be bound out, or to *whom*.

As long as they remain actual paupers, these rights are denied them.

They also lose their social and religious position. That is—they go not into society; they seldom attend church; they seldom put on mourning for the dead; it is not customary to lift up prayers for them *as a class* in the pulpit; seldom do ministers preach about them or condemn the manner in which they are supported. Few of them if any are remembered when the church assembles at the table of the Lord. And rarely are there any contributions taken for their benefit, and even churches frequently allow their aged and infirm members to close their days in the poor-house.\*

They are a neglected, suffering, dying class of our fel-

\* James Brewster, Esq., of New Haven, found two women at the almshouse, who were members of the church to which he belonged. He immediately took them away, brought their case before the brotherhood, and a vote was taken that the church should assume their support. At the same time it was voted that every

low-men, often punished severely by their keepers, if they even on a good excuse of fatigue, or weakness, or old age, refuse to do as they are told.

Such is the northern poor-house in our moral and virtuous communities—prevailing more or less extensively through the New England States, a mode of supporting the pauper people—numbering, outside of the cities, perhaps *ten thousand souls !*”

The report was listened to with great attention, and deeply mortified and distressed most of the clergymen present.

Rev. Mr. Archdale begged leave to inquire of the brother, whether town paupers could act as witnesses?

Mr. Rodman replied, “They can, because the town may be benefited in certain cases by their testimony.”

Rev. Mr. Dilly inquired, “Can town paupers be sued for debt?”

Mr. Rodman said, “Yes, they can be sued, but at the risk of the plaintiff in the case. If he sues a pauper for

Christian church ought to maintain its individual poor members.” From Mr. B.’s private journal.—AUTH.

Mr. B. educated a young man and a young girl, taken from the paupers, but they died early after giving promise of fine intellectual character.

He also sent the Rev. Claudius Herrick to the alms-house six years, at his private expense, who acted there in the capacity of chaplain. He says in his journal :—“By him many an inmate’s dying hours were consoled and his heart cheered.”

Mr. Brewster could report cases of suffering, wretchedness, and misfortune, connected with the pauperism of New Haven, that would stir the blood of honest men, and wring out tears. And he who thinks the writer has exhausted his subject in the cases which have been here brought to view, is informed that these are but specimens of large generalization. *A thousand* heart-rending histories of paupers suffering and dying in the poor-houses of New England, are in the memories of her population, and found on the records of her public offices. The cases which have been mentioned here have been brought forward to illustrate the principle we have rebuked. They faintly represent the system in its corruption and wickedness, as *the same* is even yet pursued in hundreds of New England towns.—AUTH.

debt, and gets a judgment in his favor, he must run all the risk of serving on him the writ."

"Can he himself *sue for debt*?" inquired Rev. Charles Shirley.

"Yes, because if he receives any property, he liberates the town from his future support."

"Are paupers free to contract marriage?" inquired the moderator, Rev. Samuel Chapman, D.D.

"A woman can be married *out* of her state of pauperage of course by a responsible party, and paupers sometimes are said to be married legally under ordinary circumstances. I doubt whether the selectmen of a town would allow a pauper to marry a wife who was a pauper in another town, and bring her home an expense to them. They do sometimes marry, but the circumstances of the case are always considered."

Rev. Mr. Shirley said he wished to read to the brethren the following scrap which he had cut out of a newspaper recently—he believed from the *Washington Union* of May:—"An aged maiden lady of Portland, Maine, 74 years of age, was carried to the work-house, who has a brother living in that city who was taxed the past year on the assessor's book for over \$14,000 ; also a sister whose husband is taxed for \$8,000 ; and a cousin who is reported to be worth \$50,000."

"Now," said Mr. Shirley, "I know nothing about this matter further, but if it is true, as is here represented, ought we not to blush for our humanity, and weep over the imperfect workings of our common and holy religion?"

"I saw a statement in, I think, a Connecticut paper," said the Rev. Henry Wiley, "that the town paupers of Stamford, in that State, to the number of thirty, (*more or less*,) were kept during the last severe winter, in a



cold, damp building, in a manner most revolting and cruel ; the writer, a Southern man said, ' in a much worse condition than even blacks at the South.' I haven't with me the paper, but I remember the substance of it, and it was as I have given it you. I think if these things are true, or any portion of them *nearly* so, we have a solemn duty to discharge in our own towns."

The Moderator, and also other brethren, said they had often seen such statements, but they had not treasured them up, neither paid them much attention at the time. They confessed that they had been guilty of great neglect towards the paupers. " I hope," said the Moderator, " we shall not let this matter die from our recollections, but that we may make inquiries at home and elsewhere preparatory to our individual and associational action. We must not sit quietly over a subject of such amazing wrong !"

" The Legislature of Connecticut," said Mr. Rodman, " has just affirmed the anti-citizenship of paupers, placing them on the same footing with fugitive slaves. This is a section of the act : ' Third, all other persons, being in or coming into and locating within this State, with intent to remain and reside permanently as citizens, EXCEPT aliens, *paupers*, fugitives from justice and fugitives from service, and all persons within the jurisdiction of this State, shall in all cases be entitled to the protection of its constitution and laws.' It appears," said he, " from this, that when any individual of that State, though previously a man of business and character, becomes a pauper, he loses his citizenship—is no longer entitled ' to the protection of its constitution and laws.' Is not this rank with injustice and cruelty ?—shall we *tolerate* a state of things in New England, in respect to

our poor white people—our own citizens, that simply for the offence of poverty, denies them the benefits of citizenship—the benefits of the constitution of free and intelligent States? I think we may well hang our heads if we do, and hereafter, forever close our mouths upon the enormities and cruelties of Slavery! Shall we consent to it that ten or twenty thousand white citizens, aged, infirm and poor, dependent on the charity of their fellow-men, yet guilty of no crime, shall we give our consent to the statute that takes from them their citizenship and the protection of the laws? Truly, if so, this is the age of refined barbarism, instead of high, enlightened Christianity. We need not go out of New England to thrust home the sacred remonstrance, ‘PHYSICIAN! HEAL THYSELF.’”

## CHAPTER XXXIV.

100,000 Brick. Paupers at twenty cents a day for the lot—i. e., "one forty" per week : a considerable amount of money, all things taken into the account.

\* JOHN STODDARD, a man of good calculations, and fortunate in his business affairs, took the paupers off the hands of their great god-father, the Town of Crampton—the paupers, I say, men, women, and children—three or four years ; when, being unwilling to harbor them longer, they fell again into the hands of our friends Mr. and Mrs. Siddleton. Mr. Siddleton had been a close observer the meantime of the management of others, and he thought whether it would not be a nice thing for himself and his wife if they could make "the thing" *pay* !

"Now," said he, "Mrs. Siddleton, we musn't keep these poor crittures too tenderly, nor bestow too much pious instruction on them. You see it *really* is a matter of dollars and cents. Stoddard and Bacon have made money out of them, and why can't we ? I intend they shall work now to pay for past idleness, and really think a little manual exercise will be good for them. There's Dan, and Tucker, and Bill, and Rogers, and Sam White, and young Harry the deaf boy, besides Mag

\* My friend, Mr. — —, who had much experience in the details of the management customary with the poor, gave me often many interesting facts, and much information on the subject. But he has recently deceased, to the grief of his friends, and to my individual regret, inasmuch as I had calculated much on the assistance I should derive from him in making up these papers.—AUNT.

Davis, Roxy, Ma'am Upham, aunt Jemima, the old widow Prescott, Miss Carpenter, and granny Wakeup, besides the children and the bed-ridden ones, old Josh Hicks and sister Peters. Here they are, seven-eighths of 'um able to help a great deal. Now don't let's give up all our time to nursing on 'um and teaching them, but let's see if we can't make them fly round, and earn at least the salt they eat. What's the use of having so much working material on hand without improving it? For my part, I begin to think it's a sin." And Mr. Siddleton looked at his wife very soberly indeed; Mrs. Siddleton looked thoughtfully at the subject some time. At last she said—

"It is my duty to do all for these poor souls in my power consistent with every other actual obligation. There may be such a thing as paying too much regard to their spiritual state, and too little to their temporal——"

"That's just it!" said he.

"Now, I agree in opinion with you, that if they can they ought to earn something; and as you have taken them so low this year, I feel it my duty to help you in your plans to realize something from the risk. So now what do you propose to do, Mr. Siddleton?"

"Well, first," said he, "you must dispense with the servant girl, and make the paupers do your work."

"Yes, that I can do, or can try it."

"Just so. Then we must begin, as we can hold out as to feeding and clothing them. You see it is now October, and the winter is before us—the most expensive season of the year—a long time of it now before they can do much in the fields. When the spring returns and summer, I shall take them into the fields to plant and hoe corn, make hay, reap grain, etc. But in the

meantime, we must get through the winter with as little money paid out for food and clothing as possible."

"That looks to me very reasonable ; and you know I always did advise them to practice abstinence from temporal vanities, on the well-known Gospel principle, "*Take no thought—for food.*"

"Yes, that's all right, my dear."

"They don't really need much food, Mr. Siddleton."

"Ah?"

"No ; for their natures are low, their blood is feeble, they arn't accustomed to it, they are inactive and dull, their teeth are gone or defective, and they don't expect what other folks have."

"Just so ; well?"

"I was going to say," she added, "and will now, if you please, before I forget it. They are a great deal more submissive if kept on low feed than on high. I think gruel and soup are very good for them."

"That's the kind we can best afford, you know," said he. "And we must throw in some potatoes, onions, bony pieces of meat, and provide a good deal of cheap salt meat and fish. I think that we will begin our outgoes for them at one dollar and fifty cents a week. If we can bring it inside of that, well and good—*twenty-two cents a day!* That's almost a quarter of a dollar, Mrs. Siddleton."

"A good deal of money in the end," said she.

"A very large sum, indeed ! Perhaps we hadn't better come up quite to that figure. If we begin with too great generosity, we shall certainly run aground."

"I know it," said she.

"What if we call it twenty cents a day, eh ?—one dollar forty per week !"\*

\* Says a friend, writing to me from a town in Massachusetts—"If I had the

"There's nothing like trying, husband. I can tell them we must be as economical as possible, for the times are hard and we are restricted in our out-goes."

"Very true, you can. Well, then, say 'one forty' per week. That's settled. Now, I think of opening my old brick-yard again this fall and burning a hundred thousand brick, won't that be nice work for them?"

"It will, indeed! why that's a good thought—if it will not be too hard for them, Mr. Siddleton."

"No, not at all. They can pick out the clay by little and little, load it, dump it, grind it, mould it, dry it, and pack it, fire it, watch it—do almost every thing about the kiln, and I look on, give directions, and work when I please."

"I like the plan, husband, exceedingly. It will keep the men away from the house too a great deal, and so make it more comfortable for me, and more agreeable for all."

"I've got an order for a hundred thousand brick from George Pepper and Company over at the Falls Works. They are going to put up a new factory, and will pay me the cash on delivery."

"Well, husband, go right about it. Make that your principal business till it is done, and between us we'll manage the paupers somehow or other to make them help along and earn their own support."

Mr. and Mrs. Siddleton, and the town paupers, all lived in a sociable sort of a way under the same roof. The principle adopted throughout this entire establishment was, compactness, centralization, no spare room, no waste. This house was somewhat picturesque and

time I could give you some individual cases of 'fallen fortunes,' and of the way in which the poor have been treated, which, if published to the world, would make the ears of some to tingle."—Mr. W. E., to AURA.

romantic in its outward look, having a main part originally twenty by twenty-eight feet, two stories in front and one in the rear, which was a wing running back into a steep hill that overshadowed it. This wing was on a level with the upper floor, and the roof was straight from front to rear, and under the roof was garret room for the paupers, who could climb there by a very narrow, very steep and neck-breaking little flight of stairs, the width of a closet door, occupying in the ascent but three feet leaning distance. The garret was partitioned off by a curtain, the south part for the females, who had their accommodations in that loft, the north by the men. The wing below was divided into a sitting-room eight feet by ten, and four dormitories averaging eight feet square. Besides these, there was a small wing on the west side of the rear room, used as a common room for the females, where from four to six, according to circumstances, and one or two small children extra, could bunk down over night.

We don't know how little room we really need, good friends, till we are brought into straights ! A room eight feet square will very comfortably accommodate two or three souls, (so said Mrs. Siddleton,) if they can't by any possibility of things have any more square feet. And inasmuch as "three or four in a bed" is often a jocose amusement for happy-hearted, well-to-do folks in the world—why wonder at it that a large room ten feet by twelve say, should be capable of accommodating six or eight paupers of all sizes and ages ? It is perfect amusement for paupers to snuggle up together as they sleep, for they impart warmth to each other in this manner, so doing away with the necessity of extra bedding, where that article is not to be had for love and—no money.

These apartments were the special privileges of the paupers. The balance of the building was carpeted, the windows of the front chamber-parlor were hung with embroidered muslins ; a sofa, soft rockers and chairs ; a large mirror, handsome vases, some few pictures, a large family Bible, etc., etc., were among its treasures, conveniences and ornaments. Below there was a large front dining-room, commodious bed-room, large pantry, and extra sleeping room.

From these rooms the smell of good savory dishes often found its way to the wings and lofts above. Sometimes the savory odor was the only thing of the kind that ever hobbled up those stairs.

We are not instituting any comparisons in these pages between the state of wretchedness and degradation witnessed among the paupers in the country poor-houses, and the paupers and other miserable victims of want in the cities and in their alms-houses. It is probable that in many respects the rural paupers often suffer less than those, for there is hardly any measurement of the human degradation the poor exhibit in the cities, in groups where they are driven by their common, absolute want. In one thing it is true, the country paupers have a great advantage. They can inhale the pure atmosphere of heaven, whenever they step forth from their confined and ill-flavored apartments. They also usually have access to the purest water as a beverage. And how many soever ameliorating circumstances we might hunt up and mention, these will readily enough occur to others, to the critics especially. But it is enough, that the old rural poor-house system, in its denial of citizenship ; the sale of the poor to the lowest bidder as chattels, the compulsory labor it permits ; the degradation it winks at ; the heartlessness and cruelty it cultivates, is a



NORTHERN INSTITUTION, hard by the free press, the free soil, the free school, the church of Jesus Christ the Son of God.

It is false in principle ; it is evil in practice ; it is inhuman and needlessly corrupt.

But to return to our paupers. They went back to their old quarters at Siddleton's with downcast faces, some of them in tears.

"Oh ! Mag," said Mrs. Prescott, "will that dream ever be fulfilled ?"

"God only knows," said the other, smiting her withered hands upon her head and staring wildly round her : "Yes, it must be—we can't live so. If there's a God in heaven he will fulfill it, and have mercy on us."

But Dan shook his head and grumbled, "What if there isn't a God ?"

"It'll make no difference, Dan, you know it won't," said she. "Mankind themselves will see our afflictions and relieve them."

"I never saw any good thing in mankind," said Tucker.

"No, nor I," said Dan.

"There's a m—m—mi—migh—mighty little dif—difference in—m—m—mankind—any how," stammered out Sam White, the poor shoemaker.

"There's a great difference, Mr. White," said the widow, "between God and men."

"Ye—ye—s there—is—is—so," said he.

"I believe in the Lord," said Bill.

"So—do— —I," emphatically replied White.

Granny Wakeup came in on her crutch from one of the side doors. "Well," said she, "does any body know whether we are to have any supper to-night ?"

"Didn't you eat dinner enough, Granny, to last over night ?" inquired Mag Davis.

"No, I didn't. I want my three meals a day, and hearty one's too, or I'm fit for nothing."

"I guess mother Siddleton will teach you in the course of two or three days that the last thing to be calculated on here with regularity is a meal of victuals."

"Then I can tell her she'll feel the rap of my crutch," said the haggard old creature.

"Ha! ha! ha!" screamed Roxy and Mag.

"It's no laughing matter, girl, I tell you," said she. "Do you think that aunt Prescott and me, and sister Peters, and old Joshua Hicks, eighty or ninety years of age, arn't going to have what victuals we want?"

"I tell you, she'll give you what she's a mind to, won't she, aunt Prescott?" asked Mag.

"She wants to take off our thoughts from eating and drinking, and worldly fashions, and make us ready for the other world. So far she is right, I suppose," said the widow with a sigh.

"Well, I could always say my prayers best," said granny Wakeup, "after a good warm cup of tea and a biscuit."

"Biscuit! by the Lord!" exclaimed Dan.

"Don't you have any biscuit here?" asked she.

"We have an oat-meal cake once in a while, or an Indian hard crust; do you call that biscuit?"

"No, I don't."

"You'll look through that door a good many times for any other biscuit in this house," said Mag.

"Well then, give us some milk toast."

"Ha! ha! ha!" cried Tucker.

"That ain't very dear living, is it?" said she.

"We don't get it though in this place. Toast! why I've forgot how it tastes, havn't you, Dan?"

"Yes, ten years ago," said he.

"Dried beef is good, then," said the old lady.

"Well, the beef is dry enough!" shouted Mag.

"Ha! ha! ha!" snored out Dan.

"Good for Mag," said Tucker.

"First rate," said Roxy.

Alas! old granny Wakeup, you have yet to take your first lessons in the poor-house. You will find that you have stepped down a long step from the poorest level of free society, where there is a private home and small means to do with. Oh, what a happy home is that of a poor, unpainted cottage, with a green lawn before it, a lilac bush and rose at the window, a plain, rough fence shutting it in from the road-side; a little stream warbling by; a rough shed where the little brindled cow with milk for the children, chews her cud, and the fowls walk around her, finding in the loft their nests; where the cheerful boys and girls may fill their hands with eggs for breakfast; the little pig-pen near, its occupant grunting for his evening meal; the little garden filled with plants and choicest vines. What a happy home is that to the desolation that reigns here!

Yes, granny Wakeup found it so. Mrs. Siddleton informed her that she had, all her long life, thought too much of creature comforts, and that she must now school herself into self-denial. "I shall give you all a cracker each and a little weak tea to-night," she said; "after which you had better retire, at least very soon, to rest. And mind," said she, "before you close your eyes, to lift your prayers to the Bountiful Giver of every good and perfect gift for *this day's mercies*."

Granny Wakeup had just come to the poor-house—her last reliance having failed her in the shape of an old faithful servant, brought up in her family in better days, and who, to the last, rented a part of a small

house and took in washing, by which she managed to support her aged and broken-down benefactress. The old lady had been a widow nearly twenty years. Her husband left her with a small property, which she was obliged to spend in her support ; and when brought into a state of destitution, her faithful Eunice, herself nearly sixty years of age, determined to devote herself to her comfort. Eunice had heard of the poor-house, and shuddered to think that either herself or her beloved mistress might be compelled to accept of its hollow-hearted charity, especially to submit to the degradation of a public sale at the auction block, as articles of little value.

And so Eunice labored on ten years in her benevolent duty, and the two were happy. When she died she left a little money, accumulated and saved day by day, to her aged companion ; and the only great grief she felt was for her mistress, for she saw no other way of support possible to her than that of the institution she had so long and so successfully labored to save her from.

When you degrade man, and crowd him down instead of elevating and honoring him, it makes little difference whether the act be in regard of one man in higher honor at times than another ; you commit an error that cries out against all your theories of religion, education, and refinement. If you build up yourself on another's ruins, may you not fear the foundation beneath will utter groans, and finally crumble ? Can there be a lasting peace or condition of quiet where, in town or State, there exists by law and practice a foul wrong so eminently unjust as that of denying to the aged and suffering poor, simply because of their poverty, the rights of citizenship and the protection of the laws—aye, that

permits them to be placed in circumstances where man selfishness and meanness can have full power of action, to their real distress and humiliation of the body and mind ? If it must be that the poor we have ever with us, it is not necessary that we should ourselves be the guilty party in the cause of their poverty, especially in adding to their mortification and despair.

Such provision should be made for the poor as will relieve and comfort those who are driven by their want to cast themselves on the public charity. Give them work such as they can do ; preserve their own self-respect ; cheer them, encourage them, bless them. We can see no good reason for disfranchising men of poverty, who are not criminals. Are there not hundreds and thousands of men in every State in New England who are, in respect to themselves, absolutely paupers, but who are living on their friends, or on their own brazen wits, or on borrowed capital ; yet not disfranchised, because, forsooth, they have not been entered paupers on the books of the town ?

Something akin to this has been advanced by another writer on the general subject of pauperism, and more particularly on its development in crowded cities. He says : " Where the poor are admitted to a just share in the privileges of society, the benefits for which government was appointed, and are so educated as to be prepared to avail themselves of those privileges, there the higher classes are constantly recruited by a virtuous and disciplined energy that, under such a beneficent system, has made its way from the lower, and the great end of a good government is gained, and all classes are pledged for its support and security."

He further says : " But if, instead of the poor having hope, they are trampled down into despair ; if, by the

neglect, selfishness, and oppression of the government (and neglect on the part of the government is itself, in his thing, oppression,) and the grasping avarice and, selfish luxury of the wealthy, they are kept in ignorance and wretchedness, and thus their very poverty is made the destruction of the poor, by such diabolic crushing operations of the social state as effectually forbid the poor man, or the virtuous and conscientious poor, to rise, there is no reprieve for such a state from utter perdition. The causes of rottenness and ruin are at work as powerfully and certainly in the very prosperity of the upper classes as in the ignorance and riot of vicious elements in the lower, and like the crater of a slumbering volcano, all will tumble in upon the same fire, or perhaps in some awful eruption, bury the social state in desolation."\*

\* G. B. Cheever.

## CHAPTER XXXV.

MR. SIDDLINGTON'S idea of the Gospel. Somehow or other our ideas are not always the same, nor are they always just. But if we happen to hit on right notions, by all means let them out. They may do somebody good.

THE last time Siddleton took the paupers off the hands of the town, there was a great noisy town-meeting discussion of the whole case. Many of the former opponents of the measures advocated by the "reformers," as they were called, came over from their party and voted for reform. Among these were Abraham Bacon and John Stoddard. They had seen enough in their own management to prove that the paupers might be supported at much less *expense to the town* than they now were ; and as their tax was a heavy one, they, out of purely selfish regard, voted to abolish the system of public sale, and purchase a town farm, to be carried on under the care of some person of faithful and economical character for the ultimate benefit of the town.

By the small majority of fifteen votes, the town carried through the old measure of farming out the paupers to the lowest bidder. There was great rejoicing among the reformers at the announcement : it was the promise of success ere long. The subject having been warmly and intelligently discussed, many who voted with the old party began to waver and say they were almost convinced that the new measure was worthy of a trial. Squire Ben, Lawyer Tools, and Mr. Savage, were put in selectmen, Mr. Haddock and his party being all crowd-

ed out ; the vote was too close for the exercise of any party liberality.

Mr. Siddleton, by crowding all hands into the work, was ready by the middle of October for his brick-yard operations. Not for a long time had Dan or Tucker done as much regular work day after day as now each of them performed. Bill also, old and feeble as he was, put himself to do a good day's work. Harry, the deaf boy, and Sam White also, worked hard. But by the middle of November the kiln was not ready for burning, and the weather beginning to pinch, the paupers often stopped and bent over their mouldings and shivered. Siddleton observed this, and dosed them with cider and whisky, and so drove the pile to burning. But he was compelled to hire more help than he expected. No serious accident arising, the brick were burned in good season, and Siddleton and two of his neighbors' teams, driven by *his own* hands, began the carting. The brick were all delivered on the first of February, and Siddleton, rejoicing in the speculation as the best one he had ever made, was illy prepared for the news that spread consternation over the whole vicinity the next day, when he was looking for a settlement with the company, that "PEPPER & Co." at the Falls Works had made an assignment, and estimated their indebtedness at half a million of dollars.

Mr. Siddleton was not the only one who hurried over to the factory when this news reached him, and endeavored to secure his individual claim. But his efforts were unavailing ; he returned home to dole out his complaints to his wife, whose quality of resignation was a larger degree of self-command than his, but actually a high pressure amount of resistance and ill blood, *ten degrees higher than her husband's*.



"Well, wife, we are ruined!—we are knocked in the head as sure as fate," said Siddleton.

"Why—it *can't be*, Mr. Siddleton!"

"The bricks are gone as sure as the world," said he.

"Why, what do you mean? Your are not in earnest!"

"Yes, the company have signed over, and my bricks go in with the assets!"

"Impossible! Mr. Siddleton. Is there no law?"

"None that will help us now, hang it! I wish I had been fool enough to have taken that check for a thousand dollars last week that Pepper offered me ——"

"A check declined by you for a thousand dollars, Mr. Siddleton,?"

"Yes; you see I wanted it all in a lump, and so declined it. He said, in a rather low voice, '*Mr. Siddleton, who knows what will be on the morrow? You had better take it.*' But I wouldn't, I told him. I would wait for the whole ——"

"Oh! Mr. Siddleton! Well—I declare," and she bit her lip, and *compressed* her lips, "We are really in the midst of—a Providence, Mr. Siddleton—a hard—terrible—unlooked for Providence!"

"Yes, we are, by thunder! Who would have thought it? I had my suspicions the company wasn't safe a month ago," said he.

"Suspensions, Mr. Siddleton! That don't speak very well for you—what, suspicions?"

"I heard the men up stairs say, 'Wonder if Siddleton will ever get his pay of Pepper?'"

"Why, husband—and *didn't* that trouble you?"

"Yes, I thought of it a good while."

"And didn't tell me! Oh, Siddleton! Siddleton!"

"Oh, well, it was vague after all."

"These folks often know what's going on as correctly

as other people—(oh! dear—*well!*) How *should* they know?—it's strange that they should know anything—"

"Confound the luck!" said Siddleton, pacing the floor.

"Mr. Siddleton! we must be resigned!"

"Confound the 'Pepper Co.,' say I——"

"Mr. Siddleton, compose yourself."

"I wish the whole concern was tipped into the river!"

"Why, Mr. Siddleton, have you forgotten to bear with meekness your trials and afflictions? Have you received corrections in vain?"

"They're a set of unprincipled swindlers, I——"

"Do, Mr. Siddleton, strive to endure the chastenings of Providence——"

"If I had a raw-hide I'd just put it round Pepper's back till he cried for mercy——"

"The Lord deliver you from the evil one, Mr. Siddleton!"

"Half a million dollars in! hey?"

"That's a great failure, isn't it, Mr. Siddleton?"

"Well, the scamps may as well fail for half a million as for any other sum—they'll cheat us out of all we have at any rate, and I don't see but we shall go to the poor-house ourselves!"

"Oh! no, Mr. Siddleton, there is no danger, and even if there were, *we* should be treated well; we have done so much for others."

"Hur!" grunted out the ill-minded Siddleton.

"What do you mean by *that*, Mr. Siddleton?"

"I mean, they'd apply to us our own principles," said he.

"Well, they are Bible principles, you know?" she replied, a little tartly.

"Mrs. Siddleton, the Bible should be interpreted by

those who are in trouble, not by those in comfort and power."

"Why, Mr. Siddleton! what do you mean!"

"If I were old Josh Hicks, with my bones looking through the flesh, from long confinement to my bed; my scrawny arms all shrunken and rattling, the skin of my face shrivelled and clinging to the bones of the cheek and nose; my body tormented with rheumatic pain; too weak to rise and too miserable to lie down—I should want to interpret the Bible in its most comforting ways to me, rather than in its severer words and more condemning power."

"And pray what would you in such a case do other than I have done to him?"

"I don't know that you are particularly in fault. I would interpret the Bible to me as a great, helpless sufferer, needing all its grace to sustain me."

"Well, so I do interpret it, I hope!"

"But, Mrs. Siddleton, you and I are, where it suits best our convenience, to say to them in Bible language, You must 'show yourselves *men*;' 'endure *hardness* as good soldiers of the cross;' 'man should not live by *bread* alone, but by every word of God.' 'He that *will not work*, neither shall he *eat*.' But there is a Bible class of interpretations that just suits the case of a man in the condition of Hicks."

"Well, perhaps I grant it."

"Yes, 'Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.' 'In my Father's house are many mansions, I go to prepare a place for you.' 'Cast all your care upon the Lord, for he careth for you.' 'In my distress I called upon the Lord and he heard me out of his holy hill.'"

"Now, Mrs. Siddleton, I don't say that we had better

do any differently from what we have already done. But I tell you the Bible is *the poor man's friend when you get the cream of it*. It is not merely a teacher and a scourge, but it is also a sovereign balm for all his woes."

Mrs. Siddleton was perfectly overwhelmed at her husband's intimate perception of Bible truth. She felt convicted by his reasonings of much one-sidedness in her own course of interpretation, and thought that perhaps she had some lessons to learn from the Bible herself.

But she also knew that he was laboring under a very highly excited condition of the intellect, and wisely, she concluded, deferred any permanent change in her system of management till the customary level of feeling was again perceptible. She, however, put on the tea-kettle at an early hour, and heard it hissing and steaming with unaccustomed sensations of pleasure, for she had resolved to give the whole of the paupers a tea supper and some buttered toast!

If you can get only a little leaf of the Bible *properly into the heart of man*, it will astonishingly humanize him, opening it a great way and causing it to throb, *throb*, THROB almost to bursting. There's a difference in the effect, whether the Bible be got *into* the heart therefore, or be packed all *round* it, and especially, whether it lie in the *brain* or in the heart.

Mrs. Siddleton's Bible was clear, brain-Bible, and it was handsomely folded near, but just outside of her heart, and that, a heart of stone.

When the tea-kettle boiled, and the flavor of the tea rose like sweet incense over her head, and went frolicking and gamboling up the narrow stairway, and penetrated under the doors and by the side of the doors and through the latchets of the doors; and the savory fra-

grance of the buttered toast followed it, the Bible had begun to work down *into* her heart, thawing out its ice, softening its rock and showing her a heart of FLESH !

That's the kind of heart the Gospel is looking after, and when it is found, the world over, mankind will begin their true jubilee.

As for Mr. Siddleton, he retired to his room, took down his books, went over all his accounts again and again, and continued that occupation until dark, meantime pulling his hair, giving vent to ejaculatory curses, and regarding himself as the most unfortunate man alive on the face of the earth. Unfortunately for Siddleton's plan of employing the paupers in the manufacture of his brick, the work was too hard and too great for them, while the season was cold and difficult to endure. They frequently gave out before doing a half day's work, and at no time after the first three weeks were there in the company more than two or three that were at all reliable. Many were either sick or feignedly so, and he was forced to hire, at great wages, two or three extra hands. Of course Mr. Siddleton resented behavior and disappointment of this sort, and they who *would not* work, were taught from the Word of God that they *should not eat*.

Eating and working were the two great points of interest in the case of paupers. It was certain that they must eat more or less, and the practical, interesting inquiry in that connection was, "how much *work* can be got out of them?" He who could best solve this dubious question, could also best meet the practicalities of the other point.

Siddleton, try as he would, never seemed to succeed in his plans of work. Either the plans were unsound in *themselves*, or the manner of carrying them out was de-

fective. He was sure to find himself a loser whenever he undertook to accomplish his plans by the help of the paupers. Not being philosophic enough to discover the true cause of his failure, however, he unfailingly charged it on the wilfulness of the men, (or women,) and then regarded himself in the light of a responsible party, who was conscientiously held to the duty of punishment. He established it as a rule, therefore, that if one of the men gave out before dinner, he should have no dinner ; if before supper, (as was generally the case,) no supper.

How many times the poor old, heart-broken creatures went supperless to bed, let " the opening of the books " declare, for Siddleton was too much exasperated by his disappointment, to flinch. The paupers, however, among themselves, had inaugurated a system which, despite the police regulations of Mr. and Mrs. Siddleton, afforded them partial relief. This was simply a system of begging. Dan was particularly successful in this sort of foraging. Taking with him an old bag, he wandered off some distance from home, often two, four and six miles, varying his field of operations to avoid too great frequency of application, and frequently returned with a large quantity of provision, of every possible kind and quality, which was freely passed around among the company. But for this timely supply, Mr. Siddleton's meagre looking folks had we fear, during this period, paid larger installments than ever they had before on the great debt of Nature.

The sun had hardly gone down, when Mrs. Siddleton entered the sitting-room of her dependent household with her scalding hot tea and smoking hot cream and buttered toast. Let us show you some of them.

Here is the widow Prescott, nearly ninety years of

age, not yet quite purified in the furnace, and so her trial-day lasts on. Here is Dan, trembling with the breaking up of his strong constitution, and shrinking and wasting like other feeble men ; and Bill is half bed-ridden and lame, his mind being stronger than his frame ; and there sits Tucker on a chest, leaning on a staff, looking out of ghastly eyes, and holding up an unshaven face, ugly and hateful. Within that room where there is an opened door, on his bed, groaning in his bodily suffering, is Hicks, the old man, who is not long for earth. There, in another room, are two women in one bed : these are Mag Davis and Roxy. Roxy is failing ; she has not been well for several weeks ; but this causes her no particular feeling. She is more disturbed about the non-fulfillment of that dream of Mag's, than any thing else of mortal or immortal thought. She often asks, " Will it not be fulfilled, Mag ? " And Mag answers, " Yes ! " Mag Davis is tired and hungry, and expects no supper on account of offending her mistress in the morning. Mag holds well to life. Aunt Wakeup sits rocking herself to and fro in another room, smoking her pipe, and talking vehemently and rapidly through her long, thin skeleton lips to sister Peters—poor, forsaken, coughing old invalid, one of these days to pass off !

Here also, in another quarter, in the wing opening beyond, are the paupers Rogers, aunt Jemima Hildreth, Mrs. Upham, Sam. White, Susan Carpenter, and Harry the deaf boy.

They wear a hungry, wan-looking, wretched aspect, and seem nerveless, irresolute, and stupified. Their garments hang flapping over their loose and lean anatomy like the wet, dripping, and torn canvass of a vessel around the bending yards and ropes. There is a cadaverous expression on their countenances, a ghastly, furi-

ous, lean look, that makes one shrink away. Their breathing makes the air of the room loathsome beyond the freshening breezes of the outside to sweeten—a smell of mouldy ink, of rusty rope, of dark, unventilated closets, filled with old and musty shoes and soiled garments. It smells of wounds undressed and festered; of hair uncombed for long; of scurvy-fever left unwashed upon the surface, and a visitation oft of death-air in first at this, and anon at that, window of the house. Their movements are tottering, or carelessly bold and slattering. Their bearing towards you is timid or lawless, towards each other stupid and aimless. Here they live, sicken, starve, tremble, mourn and die. Crowded together in rooms that would poorly accommodate four persons, are nearly twenty paupers; and still—*it might be worse!*\*

It was here that the matron of this charnel house, Mrs. Siddleton, betook herself with her unusual supply of good things for an evening repast.

"Come," said she, "good people, I have brought you

\* In the N. Y. *Evangelist* of July 16, 1857, we find the following. It shows us a little how the victims of intemperance and poverty live in that city.—AUTH.

"As an evidence of the moral and physical need of the 'Five Points,' the following indicates it pretty fully :

"'Recently, Mr. Pease found a dying woman in a foul apartment in Cowbay, occupied also by eight other women and one man, all drunken and infamous in the last extreme. In the upper end of the same pestilent court or close, were found, in fifteen rooms, twenty-three families, making an aggregate of one hundred and seventy-nine persons, or twelve to a room! In five of these fifteen rooms, intoxicating liquors were kept for sale! Indescribable filth, privation, disease, and indecency reigned through them all; yet seventeen children from these rooms attend the schools of the House of Industry. In eleven other rooms were eighteen families, and in nearly half of these rooms ardent spirits were sold. In one of the garrets lived two negroes with eleven abandoned white women. In twelve other rooms were found twenty-four families, consisting of one hundred and four persons. Here were two blind women, two just past the peril of child-birth; and seventy-one were children, only eight of whom attended any school, and these attended a papist school!'"



a little nice and warm tea and toast ; will you like a cup of good tea ?”

There was so much of the kindly tone of child or mother in the words she uttered, that every soul of them for the moment forgot what the kindness was that they announced ; and they started from their various dull and sinking attitudes into almost the forms of earnest, living men and women. Only Roxy whispered to Mag as the latter leaped into the middle of the floor, seizing wildly her arm, and staring up into her eyes—“I’m afraid of her ; she’s crazy, or has poisoned it !”

“Pshaw ! you simpleton,” said Mag, “it’s only natur.” And now they gathered in and about her, the old, the lame, the maimed and the blind ; the bed-ridden and feeble ones reached out their wasted arms, and stretched wide open their great, feverish eyes from out their hollow caves, searching for their portion, and rewarding the giver with their tears. And when the savory toast went round, and their mistress bade them eat of it to their content, they invoked on her the blessing of the poor, and of those that were ready to perish.

“We’ve nothing to pay you for this,” said one.

“All can feel grateful,” said another.

“It’s a good soul that’s done it,” said Bill.

“Mercy on us ! said madam Wakeup. “This is like old times with Eunice and I.”

“The Lord gives us friends,” said widow Prescott.

“Bless the Lord !” exclaimed Hicks, on his bed.

“It’s mighty good, ain’t it ?” said Roxy, recovered from her alarm.

“I hope Mrs. Siddleton will forgive Mag for her sulki-ness !” said the humbled old crone, receiving a supper of hot tea and toast with the rest.

“Never mind, Mag,” said Mrs. Siddleton.

After these things the paupers fared better during the balance of Siddleton's year. Mrs. Siddleton got hold of the other end of the Bible and became a very good teacher and comforter. The poor souls needed it, alas!

Did Mr. Siddleton commit suicide in his room that evening? No, he did not.

Did Mr. Siddleton go into apoplexy? No. Did he get crazy? No, he did not fall crazy. What in the world did happen to him? He burnt up the candle, found himself exceedingly languid and almost faint over his cogitations; so he quickly undressed, rolled himself up in the bed-clothes, and slept till morning.

## CHAPTER XXXVI.

THE European Tour.—Blind Henrietta, a Teacher of Good Things.

ALICE BOYCE was now eighteen years of age, and there existed between her and James Sherman, who was nearly through with his studies, an engagement of marriage ! It was during this year that, accompanied by Mr. and Mrs. Rodman, Alice made a trip to England. They were absent nearly six months, and were received and entertained among the relatives of her father and mother with the greatest respect, some of whom were distinguished in position of refinement, intelligence and wealth. Her appearance was so pleasing to an elderly sister of her mother, Mrs. Gladstone, a widow, that she formed the plan immediately of making her heir to her property at her decease, and promised her a marriage portion of a thousand pounds. In every delicate way possible they endeavored to persuade her to remain with them, holding out inducements that even she felt it hard to withstand, and that would have been sufficient with many bound by slighter ties of gratitude, to induce a hearty compliance. But Alice had left America, fully aware of the force of the trial that awaited her in respect to many things of this nature, it being unnecessary that we should say more than this, that between herself and Mr. and Mrs. Rodman, a correspondence with friends in England, had long been secured. She promised her friends that at some future day, she would again visit them, and would never

cease to cherish a lively impression of their love, their beautiful homes, and faces, their intelligence, piety and personal attentions.

A personal young friend of the family of her uncle, Hugh Boyce, Esq., M. P., Sir Charles Raven, a gentleman of much gravity, intelligence, wealth, paid her his marked attentions, and even sought a private interview through the medium of her uncle, to proffer to her his hand and fortune. Alice kindly, but firmly opposed it, and informed her uncle that her hand was already engaged to another, who also held entire possession of her heart, and begged him to decline the honor Sir Charles proposed to confer upon her, with many sincere regrets for the disappointment of his affections.

The party wandered into Scotland, Wales and Ireland. They also visited Paris and Rome. They went to Geneva, and made the beautiful tour of the Rhine. Returning to England, after a month, passed rapidly and felicitously, they embarked on one of the ocean steamers for America, waving adieu to friends they had found so generous and kind abroad, in the hope of rejoining those they loved at home.

Between the absent party and James, a constant and lively correspondence was maintained during the whole period of the journey. It formed no small part of the enjoyment of Alice's visit to write it in detailed paragraphs to her friend, nor did she pass silently over the matter in which Sir Charles sought to complicate her. To James, this was a source of slight annoyance and anxiety. He had no real fear of her integrity. But he could comprehend sufficiently to awaken his solicitude, that the force of the temptation might be very great, and if it did not prove sufficient to break off her engagement, *it might be an after reflection of disappointment.*

or of chagrin. Her letters, however, dispelled his uneasiness, and he looked forward with a lover's impatience to her return.

It must not be thought by the reader that in the meantime our young friend JAMES had forgotten his early history, nor that with attention to present personal duties, he is unmindful of the sufferers among whom were passed the years of his boyhood.

Not a day passes that he forgets them in his prayers—for James has learned to pray!

Not a dollar goes into his purse, without a portion being laid by for the poor who have *no* money. All his useless clothing he gives to them, and to the relief of other poor in town in danger of the poor-house. Often through his solicitation he procures for them the charitable donations of other persons; and especially urges those who are weak and almost despairing, yet out of the poor-house, to make every possible exertion for their own support, promising them all the help in his power, to keep aloof from "the tender mercies of the town, for they are cruel."

It is a morning of summer. Blind Henrietta, who has been the stay and staff of her father's helpless years, is sick and languishing, and with difficulty her father can procure for her what is wanted from the pantry and the closet to make her comfortable. But he makes the endeavor—Henrietta is to him more than silver and gold. She is his hands and feet, his bank, his provider and daily nurse. By her industry he has a home of his own, and is saved from the poor-house. This, to Captain Bunce, is more than all other mercies. The poor-house is, in his eyes, a terrible reality; not a greater necessity than a scourge of retaliation for one's own past sins and cruelties.

Henrietta is a simple, confiding girl, a child of nature, and she loves her father dearly, being quite unaware of any great dereliction on his part from the great perfect road of righteousness. To her, he has been ever a kind, an affectionate parent, and in her heart's deepest cells, she loves him, and loves nobody beside as much. She never loved mother, brother or sister as she loved him. And she pities him for his misfortunes, while she esteems it a special permission of good Providence that she has been spared to comfort him in them. She wonders what God will do for him when she is taken away, if taken away she is, before him. But as some way seems to be provided for every body, she thinks "God will not forget her papa." So she finds something to comfort her even on a sick bed.

"And how do you feel now, Hetty, since I made you that cup of tea?" said her father.

"It seems to me I am a good deal revived. Don't you think I look brighter for it?"

"Why, yes, I rather think it *has* chirked you up, Hetty. A cup of good hot tea often raises one considerable."

"I believe it does, father; I've often seen it do you good."

"Oh! Lord, yes, my dear. I have had a great many good cups of tea of your dressing."

"Well, father, you will find a small loaf of bread in the jar down in the cellar, and a little piece of dried beef, and a bit of butter, and a wee pot of jelly in the cupboard. Now go right off and get them for your supper; now do, while the tea is hot, father, will you?"

"Now, Hetty, I am thinking I'd better not, for you'll want them yourself. You've only eaten a small piece of a cracker. I think the jelly and the beef would do you a great deal of good."

"No, no, father, please go and eat them. I don't need any thing else to-night, and shall sleep a very good sleep."

"I am right glad to hear you say so, Hetty, but I really think you haven't a very smart appetite; and you know a body must eat, or he can't get strength."

"I know that; but my appetite and strength will come both together by-and-bye, when the fever goes away. I never can bear simply to make myself eat if I don't want food."

"No, neither can I, Hetty; and so to-night I will just make the tea a little hotter, and make a supper on crackers too."

"And a little beef, papa, do!"

"Well, yes—a little beef; that will be good."

"Very, indeed!" said she.

And so they lived together, helping each other in their infirmity. The Captain sat down by the little table and drank his tea, while Hetty talked to him, and fanned herself upon the bed.

"We are much better off, father, than the poor folks."

"Oh! dear, yes. They are suffering, miserable people."

"And, father, how do so many persons in the world come to poverty?"

"Oh, Lord! child, I don't know—suppose it happens so."

"So I suppose, too. And riches with some people happen, too?"

"Yes; nobody knows who'll be rich or who'll be poor."

"I suppose the rich people never know any thing about suffering?"

"They try not to, Hetty?"

"And can't they get rid of it?"

"No ; they are sometimes sicker than you or I ever are."

"Why, father, they have the best of doctors and medicines, you know!"

"Yes ; but don't you know they die, Hetty?"

"I know that ; but I was thinking they died easy. They have rich, soft beds and pillows, and so many to wait on them."

"It don't make a farthing's difference, child. They're just as dependent as any body when they come to the pinch."

"And that seems strange ! Can't any of the doctors help them?"

"Sometimes the doctors help us, you know ; so they sometimes help them. But they would have a poor means of living if it were not for a great many sick rich folks."

"So they would, indeed, father ! Why didn't I think of that ! You always tell me something I hadn't thought of before."

"You see, Hetty, I am around more than you are, and notice things how they are done ; that's all the difference."

"Well, perhaps it is," said she. "I wonder if there's many sick people now at the poor-house ? Do you know, father?"

"No, not exactly ; some are sick, I believe."

"Is old widow Prescott alive, father?"

"Yes, she's living, and Tucker and Mag and Roxy ; so is Bill and old Dan."

"Any more alive?"

"No, not that used to live with us."

"All dead and gone?"



"Yes."

"Well, wasn't it lucky that Jims got away and found a good home?"

"Very good for Jims."

"Yes it was—I was *so glad!*"

The Captain's recollections thus stimulated, seemed to him a little less pleasing on that point than her's, but she noticed it not, and the father said, "Jims has proved a smart boy."

"He will be a great man, won't he?"

"I think it likely; but we can't tell, you know."

"I really think he will though, and a very good man."

"Well, Hetty, you must not talk too much. It will tire you. Can't you get a little sleep now?"

"I do not feel wearied a bit; but if you think best, I will try to sleep."

"It will do you good."

"There is one thing, father!"

"What, my child?"

"How I should love to see old aunt Prescott."

"Why so?"

"Because she's *so good.*"

"Good!"

"Yes, she talks so good."

"Oh, yes. She's a saint, undoubtedly."

"She loves the Bible and knows it all by heart. How I wish I could hear her talk about it. I have never forgotten what she used to tell me."

"What did she say?"

"She said the Bible was meant for the poor and needy and sick and blind. 'Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest 'That,' said she, 'is the spirit of the Gospel.'"

"I suppose," said Captain Bunce, regarding his poor child with affection, and contrition, and pity, "I suppose, my daughter, she was right. We must all go to Him for rest."

"Must we—must every body? Is it He that gives rest of soul to such as go to him?"

"Yes, I suppose so. That's what the Christians say."

"Well, father, then let us go to Him—will you go with me? Go to Him that gives the weary rest?"

Captain Bunce never had such an appeal before—never one that so shook him from head to foot, and convulsed his chest, and choked his utterance.

"Let us both go to Him, father, and we shall obtain the promise—one as well as the other."

Still the Captain said nothing in reply, only he shook and sobbed till the poor girl heard his heavy breathings and begged him to come near her. Then she threw her arms around his neck, and said, "though our sins be as scarlet, they shall be as wool, though they be red like crimson, they shall be white like snow."

Her father bowed his head on the pillow and wept, and she also shed with him a flood of tears, as she murmured a prayer, beginning—"Our Father who art in Heaven."

"We have, dear father, a Saviour—an 'all-sufficient Saviour' aunt Prescott called him; and it is he that bids us come to him. He it was who healed the sick—who opened the eyes of the blind—who raised Lazarus from the dead—who, when he was himself crucified and buried, rose again to life and went up to Heaven. He is the Judge of the world, and the Redeemer of men. I begin to love him for his love, to triumph in his glory, and to confide in his promise. Oh! father, let us follow

him to prison and to death, through evil report and good, till we die."

"It seems to me, my daughter, that I will," said the humbled father.

"Oh, what a blessed thing to us, then, is that promise, 'I will give you rest!'" said the weeping invalid.

"May be it means spiritual rest," said her father.

"May be it does. How comforting to feel, then, our sins forgiven for his sake, and all our iniquities purged away!"

"That, oh! that," said her father, "is what I need; for I have sinned greatly, and have lightly esteemed the rock of my salvation."

The poor girl wept; the father bowed down and prayed.

## CHAPTER XXXVII.

CHRISTIAN Benevolence.—Dan.

BETWEEN Mr. and Mrs. Haddock and James, there still continued a friendship of the strongest nature. The latter remembered them in connection with every incident of his boyhood that had any bearing on his after-life of freedom and happiness. Had it not been for them, he confessed he might still be a gaping, half-idiotic fool, in rags and deep poverty, the chattel of the town. He frequently called at their house—running in at breakfast, dinner, or tea, as it best suited him, or passing the evening and night. They called him one of their children.

In concert with each other, they often formed some plan of visiting the poor at their rendezvous, the poor-house, or of carrying relief to such of the inhabitants of the town as they knew were pressed with hard fortune.

About the time the events alluded to in the last chapter occurred, Mrs. Haddock asked James when he would accompany her on a visit to Henrietta and her father.

"I have some little things that I wish to give Hetty," said she.

"Day after to-morrow I will go," said he.

"Is it some time since you were there?" she asked.

"I have been there within five or six weeks," he answered.

"I visited them three weeks ago with Mr. Haddock,"

said she, "and Henrietta was not very well at that time. Although I presume it was only the result of fatigue and over-exertion to support her father, yet I am quite anxious to see her again."

"Go by all means," said her husband.

"Let us take Ellen with us," said James.

"Ellen is going to pass the week at her sister Frances'."

"Too bad, Ellen!" said James.

"Yes, I should think so, if I didn't hope for some other opportunity," said she.

"I would not deprive Fanny of your visit on any account. And you look for me at tea some evening, too, will you?"

"Oh, yes—with pleasure."

"Well, then, I will not fail to be there. And, by the way, tell Mr. Maitland and Fanny that we expect our tourists home the first of September."

"Ah! is it possible?" said all. "Then you have just heard?"

"Yes, this morning," said he. "They have returned to London, and will not fail to leave for home about the middle of August."

This was very pleasing news to the company. Mr. and Mrs. Rodman were very happy in their parochial relations, having secured the regard of the greater portion of the people, old and young. Their absence was a source of regret to the parish, but not of discontent. On the contrary, they had encouraged them in taking the excursion, and readily contributed in part to its expense, in the meantime paying a young unmarried minister a hundred dollars a month to supply the pulpit.

True to his appointment, James appeared at Mr. Haddock's to accompany Mrs. Haddock to the cottage of Captain Bunce. They arrived there about eleven in

the forenoon. It was a very ordinary looking dwelling, very small, very common ; but the hand of neatness had evidently been there ; and all round the building there were marks of taste that reconciled one to the lowly looks of the cottage itself.

Our friends were surprised to find Henrietta so ill.

"Why did you not send up word to me?" said Mrs. Haddock, reproachfully, though tenderly.

"I had no opportunity," said she ; "and I did not feel as much unwell as now until Monday last. Since then I have looked for you, and have greatly desired to see you."

"I am very glad that I came. Now I shall stay with you all day, and James can return with the horse when he feels obliged to. Mr. Haddock will come for me at evening."

"I am in no haste," said he, "and I should like to talk with the Captain awhile when he comes in."

"Father will be home directly, I think," said Henrietta. "He has gone into the woods for winter green leaves and spruce to make himself a little beer. I think he can't have gone far."

"I will wait awhile," said James, "and if he should not return will go for him. And how is your father, Henrietta?"

"He is pretty well, I think, and very attentive to me now."

"I am very happy to hear that," said Mrs. Haddock.

"It is very good in him certainly," said James. "You have been always a help to him, and he must feel your sickness very sensibly."

"Just see here, Henrietta, what a huge bouquet of roses we have brought you ! James and Sarah made it *before we left home.*"

"Why! it is perfectly delicious and reviving," said Hetty. "Thank you, sir, and thank Sarah for me—the dear girl, I wish she had come with you."

"Oh! Sarah is my main 'arm' at home. I could hardly keep house but for her. She will manage in my absence very well, and see that her father's dinner is ready for him in season."

"Yes, Sarah is a sterling girl," said James, "and a great favorite of her father and mother."

"She is the *youngest*, Mr. James," said Mrs. Haddock.

"Well, there is something in that I grant," said he.

"She must come and see me as often as she can; may she, Mrs. Haddock? You know I can't go about a great deal, and am a 'home body' on my own and on father's account."

"She certainly may come often. Here is one of her custard pies for you, made by herself. And here are a few biscuit, and some bread, and a little jar of quince jelly for you, and so on. And her father has sent you some meat in the basket. So you need not feel any uneasiness about food for the present. The girls have sent you down several little articles of dress, Henrietta, which we will look at by and bye.

"They are kind—you are all so kind," said she. "I can hardly bear it, especially as I can do nothing to repay you."

"Oh! Hetty, never mind about that, do not speak so. We have done nothing that was not our duty to do. We should be poorly paid if we looked for some return, for freely we have received, and freely we must give."

"Were it not for you, we may have been obliged before this wholly to go upon the town," said she, "and that we both shrink from. But now we do not fear it as much as we once did."

"Oh, I hope and trust there will be no necessity for taking that step," said Mrs. Haddock, "and if you do not think there will be, why of course it is not very likely to happen."

"I did not mean to be understood precisely so, ma'am," said the deeply sensitive and affected Hetty. "We are but a little way from pauperism, although through your kindness, and my own work, and what the town has given us here, we have had sufficient means for our support. But where there is poor health, such as both father and I have, and nothing laid up 'against a wet day,' the danger is very great of coming to want. I, however, meant to say, that father *looks at things with a different eye*, Mrs. Haddock, and he seems *so resigned*—that's what I referred to."

"Dear child! dear Hetty! Bless you, my dear friend, how you have awakened my surprise and gratitude. How is it—pray tell me?"

"Sure enough," said James, "we rejoice at the good news."

"It is nothing that ought not to be the case always," said Hetty. "Have we not received of the Lord, and shall we not repay him with our love! So I had the other evening a long good talk with father about aunt Prescott, and her love of the Bible, and how I wished she would come here and talk with me; and we both of us got deeper and deeper and deeper into the subject, till we both said we would go to Him who in the New Testament invites the weary and heavy laden to come to Him for rest. And if you will believe it, father was so much overcome, that he sobbed aloud, and kneeled down and prayed! And so it has been ever since. He prays a humble, penitent prayer, and says the Lord may *do with him as seemeth to Him best*."



Mrs. Haddock covered her eyes with her handkerchief, and for a moment she could not utter a word. But she pressed the hand of Hetty in her's, and silently lifted her heart in thankfulness to God.

"Well, I declare," said James, "your narrative has interested me exceedingly. I rejoice with you, and I trust you will both find friends enough to keep you henceforth from all fear of the poor-house. I think if they don't, the Lord will."

"Yes, yes," said Mrs. Haddock, "never doubt that. I am glad that you have been able to tell me this. Nothing, not even thousands of silver and gold, could do you so much good as that peace of mind which is of God, and that leads one to confide in him, and to rejoice in his government over us."

"I am ignorant, very ignorant, so is father, of the Bible. But we now mean to read and study it more every day."

"That is right—that is the true way to enlighten the mind, for the Word of God is a light unto our path and a lamp unto our feet, and it is able through faith to make us wise unto eternal life. We are, moreover, instructed to search the Scriptures, and to believe in them as the record God has given us of his Son, Jesus Christ. They unfold a most sublime and most beautiful system of mercy, justice and benevolence in the government of God, and are indeed to one as a well of water springing up into eternal life. The Bible, Hetty, will be a great source of enjoyment to you now, and I do feel most happy that you have come to find its value, both you and your father."

"Yes, it is a joyful piece of intelligence," said James. "I must see your father—I wonder he is out so long."

"He will come soon, I think," said Hetty.

"I will go out and find him ; you know I love to roam in these woods. Hereabout I used to fish in those cold winter days for Boyce, and roam for nuts in the summer. Oh, Hetty ! do you remember those times—was it not a singular sort of life ! Don't it look like pure fiction—eh ?"

"A sorry sort of one," said she.

"Yes, indeed—'a sorry sort of one,' " said Mrs. Haddock.

"Oh, to be sure," said he. "But a real one. I declare to you it rises to my view every day of my life, as the strangest and yet most interesting and eventful thing that could ever have happened to me—and, indeed, as a most strange and singular life to us all, abounding in circumstances of melancholy interest from first to last, but not wanting points of positive enjoyment. It was a wild, painful life, motionless, wretched. We shall have better things, Hetty," said he, "better things at the poor-house soon !"

"Indeed !"

"Yes, we shall see the old manner of supporting the poor abandoned ; and they will occupy a large house and live on a fine farm, and work at good trades in shops, and be again men and women. I shouldn't object to living among them myself if it should be found necessary."

"Are you sure it will be so ?" inquired the poor girl, almost with an earnestness of wildness.

"We think there is little doubt of it," said both Mrs. Haddock and James

"Then," said she, "father can be comfortable if he should be left alone and friendless !"

"Don't grieve for your father, Hetty, we will see *that he is taken good care of. He will not want for friends.*"

" Well, then, if that is so, Mag Davis' dream will come to pass, won't it? How strange!" said Hetty. And so, as they asked her about it, she had to tell them of Mag's dream. James said Mag had told it to him years ago, and predicted its fulfillment partly on his own good fortune.

" They might have been something, those paupers—they were not all demented nor demoralized," said James—" if their poverty had been made respectable. There was and is the error. It was put down so low, that it effectually crushed them. If they had any desire to rise, they could not ; and they were shut out of the pale of Christian benevolence by a selfishness that denied them any true commiseration. They were neither respected nor pitied. Indeed, as paupers, they occupied little attention any way. Little was expected of them. They were viewed as past their usefulness, and a burden. So the paupers were an incumbrance in life, and in death were hardly worth the cost of the undertaker's bill. A bill introduced into one of our Legislatures to give the bodies of paupers to surgeons, was probably to get rid of the expense of burying them.\* Oh! there is no boundary to human selfishness. Give it fair play, and it would strip the earth of every thing green, and the sky of every thing bright. It has instituted this system of supporting poor folks. There is no Christian benevolence in it. The object is to save a greater expense by preparing for this. Paupers left to roam at large would demoralize the country, and be a heavy tax on individuals. So they are put into one common charge, as the town's worn-out property, like old wagons with rattling spokes and broken arms ; carts with broken tire and axle ; stoves rusted through, and valueless pails with

\* New York Sun, Jan. 8, 1857 See page

broken handles, dresses too often patched to be longer worth the thread to mend them, brooms worn short up, an old horse without teeth to grind his food——”

“Why, James!” said Hetty.

“Quite a picture!” said Mrs. Haddock.

“I know it,” said he, “but it’s the truth. Do not the poor-house laws disfranchise men, sell them at auction, refuse them a vote, forbid them to serve on a jury, (but not to be *judged*,) take away their children, refuse to sanction a freedom of marriage, or always to legalize it; and as we have seen, would not many be found willing to give their ‘dead bodies to the surgeons?’ (You may condemn the system of slavery, but remember your own glass house.) And to complete the picture, sell them on the block, in public town-meeting, to the lowest bidder! Here is our Christian institution. I have a right to speak of it, and to denounce it. I have seen and felt it. I have on my body now its seal. This is Northern Christianity and humanity! This is the compassion of enlightened free citizens——But I will not go on. I will leave you and go after Captain Bunce.”

So saying, James strolled out into a dense grove on the border of the old pond where he had formerly spent a good many days in fishing. Following a path that led through it to a large open field beyond, he was about to cross a ravine through which a small stream was passing, when the sound of voices arrested him; and looking attentively through the hemlock boughs that hung thickly around, he saw two men seated on a log at the edge of the stream, quite earnestly engaged in talking. One of these was the Captain—the other, after a little scrutiny, he discovered to be none other than Dan Barnes.

Knowing very well the wandering, gipsy manner of *life the paupers* led, and Dan in particular, he was not

surprised to see him. Hesitating whether to retire or to advance, he heard enough to satisfy him that their conversation was on the subject of religion. Curious to know what these two men would say on a theme they had not usually been accustomed to regard with much solemnity of feeling, he continued in the concealment of the boughs for some minutes. The men had evidently been sitting there and talking for a good while. The Captain had gathered a bundle of spruce boughs for his beer, and they lay beside him. In like manner, Dan had replenished his foraging bag, and it lay near on the ground. He was evidently listening attentively to the conversation of the other, with his head bent forward and his eyes on the ground. The other was sitting facing him; and as he talked, he frequently elevated his hand and reached it out, and pointed with his finger as men do when engaged in conversation—especially when in argument one would convince or persuade another.

Without being near enough to hear connected sentences, James was satisfied that the Captain was endeavoring to impress on the mind of his listener the great riches of salvation, and to induce him, a poor, lost and guilty being, to make them his.

James would not interrupt the scene. He was about to withdraw, when he was overwhelmed with the sight of those men, whom he had known as hardened in sin, violent in temper, and personally hateful to each other, kneeling down together as if in the attitude of prayer!

Silently withdrawing to the edge of the wood, he there waited ten or fifteen minutes till Captain Bunce came up with his bundle of twigs, when the two passed on to the cottage, James remarking an unusual expression of seriousness and truth resting on the countenance of his old master.

It indeed seemed almost too good to be true, that one whose course of life had been so misdirected and violent as that of Captain Bunce, should be led in his advancing years to honor, by his faith and repentance, the cross of Christ. But is it not of the lost and guilty among men the followers of the Lamb are to be chosen? Was he too guilty to repent and too old in sin to show his faith? Might we not expect of his class larger numbers would be gathered into the fold, and be found the most laborious and serviceable of disciples? Yea, verily, for says the Son of God, "Go ye rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. \* \* \* I came not to call the righteous but sinners to repentance."

## CHAPTER XXXVIII.

Mrs E. FLUSH argues for the Sacred Scriptures *vs.* the righteous poor. It is well to let the Scriptures interpret themselves on some questions; when we interpret them, it is very often to favor our cause. But if you are in want of a good, sagacious interpreter of Holy Writ, send for Emeline Flush.

AMONG the inmates of the poor-house, we have spoken of Joshua Hicks, an aged, bed-ridden pauper. His life had been one of great vicissitude and some suffering. He was a native of Crampton, and of a highly educated and respectable family. When a boy he was regarded as the best mathematician in the schools of the town. At twenty-one he was formally voted as the town surveyor. Nearly all the early surveys of land in that town had been made or re-examined by him during a period of forty years. His disposition inclining him to see foreign parts, he had several times made voyages to sea, as circumstances favored it, and had twice been round the world. He had made large collections of shells and minerals and plants, from the different places and parts of the world visited, the Pacific Islands, the Mediterranean, its Asiatic and African coasts, Capes Horn and Good Hope, India and Japan, the Coasts of Norway, Sweden and Denmark, the distant waters of the Black Sea. Thrice he was shipwrecked. The plague seized him in the East, and he nearly lost his life. He was never long at a time, over three or five years, it is certain, absent from home. He was never married, but when he was thirty years of age, a young lady died to

whom he was engaged, and caused him his first and deepest earthly sorrow. Within the next ten years, his father and mother died, and his only brother. Engaging in mercantile pursuits, he was burnt out and lost his property. When sixty years of age he removed to another State and continued there four years, but returned to Crampton, where he followed the business of surveying till he was seventy-five, and was fined during that period sixty-seven dollars for bringing into the town a pauper.\* Soon after he was seventy-five years of age, he became very ill and lost the use of one of his limbs. His general strength also failed him, and having no relations within the proper legal boundaries to afford him aid, he was partially supported by the town till his eighty-fifth year.† After this he became a pauper *in re*. Slowly but surely the surveying and voyaging of Joshua Hicks brought him round to the narrow limits of life at the poor-house.

Sam White, the poor shoemaker—yes, what of him? He was not a native of Crampton, but acquired a settlement there—so it was finally decided, a suit at law having arisen on the question whether he belonged to Crampton or to Oakville, his native town, or to Haretown, where he had also lived.

It was proved, however, that he lost his residence in Oakville, never truly had one in Haretown, and just gained it by only one week in Crampton. But for this, he would have become a State pauper.‡

In Haretown he resided a part of ten years. But he also resided in three other towns a portion of the same ten years, never long enough to acquire a title to the support of either town. Once, it is true, he owned a

\* See Conn. Statutes. † Father, mother, grandfather or grandmother, brother or sister, children or grandchildren. ‡ One who has no legal settlement in the State.  
—Conn. Law.



piece of real estate in Haretown, paid taxes on it and voted. But the amount was not enough to answer the law, as it was proved on trial.\*

In Crampton, he resided a year and then left the town and also the State. He returned to it again in six months and remained, industriously prosecuting his trade for about two years, when he again removed. He was unknown at Crampton then for thirteen months, when one day, about the first of January, he appeared again in that village and put himself to hard industry at his shoe bench. Five years he thus supported himself, when he was seized with a fever and laid by from his bench for his maintenance during the rest of his life. On his recovery he performed slight service here and there for such persons as needed help, and begged some portion of his scanty subsistence. This he did for (as it was proved) the period of fifty-three weeks, when he left Crampton and went back to Haretown and Oakville, where he resided in all seven years, dividing his time between them. Happily (shall we say it?) for White he held over in Crampton that one week. It made sure his continuous residence in the State six years without, during any portion of that time, receiving aid from the town authorities, and so he acquired a legal settlement there.†

He was warned out of Haretown and Oakville during the periods of his last sojourn there in beggary, it being evident that he would sooner or later become somebody's pauper! The authorities of the towns were as much afraid of him as of a wild beast that is hunted

\* See Conn., Vt., Mass. Laws, Chitty on Evidence, etc.

† Six years residence in a town, if one has no real estate, and has had no help in that time from the town, constitutes a claim to a legal settlement. Where there is actual ownership of real estate to the value of three hundred and fifty dollars, and taxes are paid on it, a legal settlement is secured.

from place to place, and a price set on his head.\* Unfortunately for Crampton, it was proved that he had resided as a good and faithful citizen, a voter, and payer of a poll tax in that town the full period (though little more !) of six years, and Crampton had to meet his support. He was now sixty years of age, and Siddleton made him hammer and stitch at his shoe-bench on the shoes of the paupers.

Miss Peters, otherwise called Sister Peters, a toothless, feeble, wasted old specimen of single-blessedness, had been one of the gay beauties of a town where there was a large and very celebrated university. She enjoyed the highest facilities of fashionable life in the place, and went through several rounds of admirers in many a distinct and passing class of university students. But at length she lost her youth and beauty. Her coquetry and sentiment grew stale. The students paid attention to younger girls, and Miss Peters and her falling locks went by the board. Out of ten chances for matrimony, on which she reckoned as certain any time she wanted them, no one ever ripened. The pear looked beautiful for a time and then it blasted. In the waning of her triumphs, Miss Peters removed with her father to Crampton, and at seventy-five years of age, after having been very serviceable there for years as a member of the Ladies' Sewing Society, and a pattern of virtue and industry, she found herself too feeble to maintain herself, and with no friends able to support her. She came on to the hands of the authorities a feeble old woman, poor

\* According to Conn. Statutes, a poor man liable to come to a legal settlement in his poverty in the State may be warned out of town.

PAUPERISM AND PROSPERITY.—The late John Avery Parker, a successful merchant of New Bedford, was at one time "warned" to leave Westport, Mass., under the old law or custom of warning strangers who were likely to become a public charge. He died worth \$1,300,000.—Ind. March 25, 1853.

in purse, poor in health, poor in intellect, poor in every thing but poverty, and in that affluent !

Yet Miss Emeline Flush did not see how important it was in these respects that she should use all *her* art to secure the hand and heart of Lawyer John Tools. She played a long, systematic game of coquetry with that gentleman, and only surrendered under other and entirely different circumstances from those that Miss Peters permitted to rule her. She idolized Mr. Tools, and Mr. Tools was half crazy for her. But Miss Flush didn't tell Mr. Tools how much she adored him ; nor did Mr. Tools get a convenient occasion to whisper to her his ruling passion for a good long day of trial. But Mr. Tools' attentions were very marked, and they were read by Miss Flush, and by Miss Shauney, and by Mrs. Cornelia Williams, a widow of thirty. They were very evident attentions, and Miss Flush knew it.

But at length Miss Flush and Mr. Tools were compelled to make a declaration. Mr. Tools' was, that he had for several years admired her character, and that she possessed just the points of feminine loveliness that pleased him ; and he had no objection to a common lot with her, if agreeable. Miss Flush's was, that she had not thought much about it ; she had been otherwise pre-occupied in her thoughts ; she had a good home with her sister, and very little *to* care for in this world ; but she would confess that Lawyer Tools' attentions to her had not passed without her notice or reflection. She supposed it might be right for her to take the subject into consideration, and she would do so. Mr. Tools thanked her, and begged the liberty to kiss her hand, which she neither gave nor declined ; so Mr. Tools took it gracefully to his lips.

Theirs was a long courtship ; and it might have been

longer, but that Miss Shauneey began to die of love for Lawyer Tools, considering herself the object of a reasonable share of his attentions to warrant that course of action. Now Miss Flush could not endure this in Miss Shauneey, and she made up her mind that Miss Shauneey should for once in her life be disappointed. So when Lawyer Tools came round again, as he did every day, she gave him a most cordial welcome, and put so much personal regard into her manners, that if Mr. Tools had ever for a moment wavered in his attachment and devotion, there was an end to it now and forever. Accordingly, when she gave him permission to kiss her hand again, (this was now the second permission of this sort,) as he stooped down to do it, she dexterously so interposed her cheek that Mr. Tools (who was altogether taken by surprise) could not help substituting it for her hand, to the heightening of her color and his own. Indeed, they were both compelled to sit down on the sofa side by side; and Mr. Tools declared he was almost perfectly happy, and Miss Flush rewarded him with a long side glance, that spoke more than any words could.

From this time Miss E. Flush consented to regard herself as actually under an engagement of marriage to Lawyer John Tools; and such was the understanding some time ago, and such is it even now—the parties not yet feeling at liberty to consummate the act of matrimony, on account of the high rates of living and the dangers of a poor-house!

Miss Flush is also the same earnestly-engaged member and president of the Ladies' Sewing Society, and advocates doing more than ever to fill out missionary boxes, and to earn money by fairs, lottery sales, fortune-telling, and so forth, to repair churches, and to build up religion! This is Miss Flush's great, clear idea of Christian

progress. She is opposed to almost all other kinds of benevolence—not perhaps from principle, but because it introduces confusion. She can't see things as clearly. The idea of a town farm-house and all its appendages to elevate the poor, and to relieve the sick and feeble ones, she does not consider as lying within the direct sphere of *her* woman's influence or effort. She thinks it a matter that should be left to the action of the town authorities ; but she tells James Sherman that her "mind is open to conviction."

"Then go with me and one or two of our ladies to the poor-house. Go to Mr. Siddleton's and see the poor creatures there for yourself."

"I don't know but I may," said she. "I should like to see if they really come within the sphere of our ladies' benevolence. Should it prove so—should I perceive that they are really a forsaken and deserving class, most assuredly I should labor for their elevation and comfort."

"You cannot fail to make this discovery, especially if degradation and misery, squalid poverty and misfortune have any claim to your regard and patronage. They are a conglomerate of good, bad, and indifferent characters, yet every one of them has a sensitive nature, a human intellect, more or less sound, and an immortal soul."

"Are they not vicious and ill mannered?"

"They are not particularly offensive in these respects to strangers. They frequently utter oaths in their conversations, and drop remarks on the spur of occasions you may not relish ; but generally they speak a very earnest and sincere language. And you should remember that they are far the greater part native citizens of Crampton."

"Born here!"

"'Born here!' Of course they were, and they have

been in some instances persons of influence, refinement and piety."

"I should doubt their 'piety' I think, Mr. Sherman."

"On what account—why may they not have piety?"

"Simply on Bible grounds I should place it. Do we not read in the Psalms,\* 'I have been young and now I am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread?'"

"And do you quote this as showing that true Christians may never become so poor as to want for bread?"

"I do; I think the language is absolute."

"It may be as to David's experience."

"And that was a long life, Mr. Sherman."

"True, it was; yet he himself once begged bread of Ahimelech the priest, you remember."

"Yes, he did; but was not that a peculiar exception?"

"The same that every rare case presents—nothing further. He was then seeking to escape the search of Saul. Exceptions to absolute and general statements of Scripture even, frequently arise."

"Do you find them in this case of which the Psalmist so confidently speaks?"

"To be sure. Has not the Saviour taught us this?"

"In what manner, pray?"

"Oh! well: in the case of persecution for righteousness' sake. 'Ye shall be hated of all men for my sake, persecuted and driven from city to city, subsisting with the utmost difficulty in hunger, cold and nakedness. He that killeth you will think that he doeth God service.' Does not this imply poverty and great want?"

"What further instances of this nature?"

"These might be deemed sufficient to prove exceptions; they are, however, numerous—they almost indeed

\* Ps. 37 : 25.

make of themselves a rule ; as for example, ' He that giveth a cup of water to a disciple in the name of a disciple, shall not lose his reward.' The Saviour represents a case of desire or want in the one case, and of ability in the other. No proof here of absolute poverty or beggary, it is true, but it illustrates such a condition. We have the case given of Lazarus, covered with sores, begging crumbs from the table of Dives. We are shown the proceedings of the last judgment—' *I was an hungered and ye gave me meat,*' says the Judge, ' *athirst and ye gave me drink ; naked and ye clothed me ; sick and in prison and ye came unto me, i. e., inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.*' "

" These are all striking instances of Gospel grace to poor and undeserving sinners," said Miss Flush ; " but I hardly think they can be taken to disprove the positive statement of so wonderful a saint as David. I might admit them as exceptions—still, I should hardly be willing to say that modern paupers were exceptions to this great Bible standard, so far, at least, as my own observation has gone."

" You must certainly go and visit them, Miss Flush—go and see the old widow Prescott. She is a very excellent old lady, and I think her a pious soul. But I wish to say further about this matter of argument on the words of David, that his language does not so much regard a state of *actual need* of help—such, for instance, as our paupers are in—as that of vagrant *beggary* from door to door, although even that I hold might actually be witnessed, and not vitiate the words of the Psalmist. But there is a wide difference between a necessity of *help* and *actual strolling beggary*."

" Do not the paupers stroll about begging?"

"Some of them do : it is no admission against the argument I advance if so ; but I do not believe it is customary for the professedly pious even of the paupers to stroll about the country begging for food."

"Well, Mr. Sherman, can we really put confidence in the professed piety of one who is actually in want of assistance to keep him from starving or beggary, in the face of such a sweeping standard, so plain and unambiguous as that I have called to your notice ? Would it not almost lead to skepticism and infidelity to do away with the force of those words ?"

"I must be allowed to say, Miss Flush, that your adherence to your own theological ideas, and your partiality for the truisms of the Bible, are deserving of great applause, viewing you merely in the light of a polemist. But I cannot avoid saying that you seem to move in a rather circumscribed orbit, which indeed hardly ever brings you where the light of the Gospel and the very words of Christ fall on you. But this is perhaps rather a consequence of your impregnable position, than an evidence of weakness."

"I adhere to it, Mr. Sherman, simply because it is represented as so absolute, universal, and necessary truth. I can not see a reason why it should be found longer among the sacred writings, if such arguments as have been advanced by you could for an instant weaken it."

"Your argument, Miss Flush, is, I think, one that proves too much, and in that light should be abandoned. Now philologists, as you know, suggest different readings of the passage itself ; as, for example, 'I have not seen the righteous forsaken (even when most reduced, *though*) his seed were begging bread.' Whether this be *admissible or not*——"



"Not by me!" said Miss Flush.

"Well, let it go. But whether admissible or not, you imply that a pauper or a beggar is synonymous with one 'forsaken' of God. This, I think, is a weak point in your argument; for Job himself demonstrated, and in his own case exemplified, the contrary. Job was in the deepest affliction and poverty. His friends regarded this as you do our poor and afflicted Christian paupers, precisely—as evidence that God considered him as a hypocrite, and had forsaken him. They overlooked his present state as one of trial and discipline, and the future as a state of retribution.\* They said to him, 'God will not cast away a perfect man.' (Job. 8: 20.) 'Whoever perished,' inquired Eliphaz, (Job 4: 7,) 'being innocent, or where were the righteous cut off?' But Job to this might have said, 'Was not righteous Abel cut off, being innocent?'—and godly 'Lot driven from Sodom to a mountain cave?'† He did say, 'Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither. *The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord.*' And he also said, '*What! shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?*'‡ Is not this a state of trial? Do not the righteous suffer here? Must they expect only good things? Thus Job answers and reasons, ever affirming that the tabernacle of *robbers* prospered here; that the wicked spend here their days in wealth, and in a moment go down to the grave, as the Psalmist himself says of them, 'Thou sittest them in slippery places, and their feet shall slide in due time.' David himself, like Job, saw the godly often in affliction, while the wicked spread themselves in wealth and power like the green bay tree. But what was Job's latter end and experience? He,

\* Henry in Comp. Com., Job. † Scott, Job 8: 20-22. ‡ Job. 2.

the most afflicted and miserable of mortals, yet maintained through the trial his integrity, his purity, his honest trust in God ; and we read that the Lord blessed the latter end of Job more than his beginning."

"There are two objections," said Miss Flush, "to your argument from Job. The first is, that he is represented as a man of great integrity, and without any perceptible fault of his own, was given over into the power of Satan to prove how much his piety could resist his assaults—(our paupers, Mr. Sherman, have most of them, by lives of intemperance and extravagance, ruined themselves!) The second is, that the whole history of Job may be fabulous, and so unworthy of credence."

"Then some of the most precious truths and principles of religious faith must perish."

"Oh! I do not say it is so—but it *may* be, you know?"

"I 'know' no such thing, but build my faith on it as confidently as on the Psalms of David."

"Well, I do not see that it is necessary to depend on the second objection, as the other is so unanswerable."

"I do not think it at all 'unanswerable.' Satan can do an injury to no good man without Divine permission. Job's case is illustrative of many whose trials and scourges have been brought on them for the glory of God and for the direct good of their souls. It is a marked, a special, a most extraordinary case, but by no means wanting in circumstances that place it outside the range of human casualties, and so illustrative of human experience. We are all in the hands of God, who can give us over to temptations from Satan that will inevitably destroy us unless we are supported by him. So was it with Job, God defended his life and delivered *his soul*. And he will, with every temptation, provide

a way of escape to all such as fear him, although he may see it best greatly to scourge and afflict them."

"The paupers, Mr. Sherman, hardly will pass for a *class* of righteous men—even if there are persons among them who have piety, perhaps of a dubious sort."

"Miss Flush, let me read you what David says on the very point you so bravely defend. 'The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord ; and he delighteth in his way. *Though he fall,*'—notice this, if you please—'*Though he fall he shall not be utterly cast down* : for the Lord upholdeth him with his hand. I have been young and now am old, yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread.' Now, my friend, please tell me, if you have ever fully considered this matter in the light of its antecedent truths?"

"Well, I cannot say precisely, I may have."

"I know it is altogether probable you have read the connecting passages a hundred times ; but I am constrained to think you have thought far less of their import than of the other. They surely teach that a good man may 'fall' into affliction, poverty if you please, and be no less immediately a subject of Almighty grace and love ; that to be in affliction, that is, say in poverty or beggary, is not necessarily to be 'forsaken,' but to be in a state of discipline and trial. And we are especially to notice, that this language, 'I have not seen the righteous forsaken,' &c., 'may relate especially to THOSE who are charitable to the poor, and liberal of their substance to meet the necessities of the needy and afflicted, and intimates that David had never observed any, in his long life none, who by reason of their charities had ever been brought into straits of poverty themselves, or entailed it as a consequence on their children.'"\*

\* See this matter here elaborated into an argument, in *Comprehensive Com., Henry, Scott, etc., etc., Job, Psalms, Gospels, etc.*—*Acra.*

"Why! Mr. Sherman, *I never did* regard the subject in that light. Is it at all probable it may have any such explanation?"

"I think so."

"You must excuse my frankness; I receive new interpretations of favorite scripture passages with great reluctance. I will converse with you again sometime, but assure you my views of the main question, while they are exceedingly tenacious, are yet such as at the outset I informed you; they leave my mind open to conviction."

James' heart, however, sunk within him at the dismal prospect of convincing by argument such an open mind, and though well aware he was no match for her in concentration or subtlety, he yet felt confident he had 'put' the case for the poor before her in the honest convictions of truth, not always deficient either in strength of argument. He was very anxious that Miss Flush might alter her opinions respecting the paupers, for no other woman nor any dozen men in the town had so much influence as she in keeping up the opposition to the efforts of the reformers. She seemed to regard the movement as fanatical, and as anti-scriptural—especially, though altogether erroneously believing that it would turn away the minds of the people from their customary and long approved modes of Christian benevolence, and so be an injury to the cause of religion! \* \* \* \*

Miss Flush said she would sometime or other visit the poor-house.

From time to time, a good many of the citizens of Crampton, besides Miss Flush, had thought they should visit the poor-house.

## CHAPTER XXXIX.

*Grandfather Sherman.*

WHEN James Sherman, senior, sold all that he had in Crampton, and removed to the West, he knew not to what part of that country he should finally direct his course. Oppressed as many a doting father has been by the bad conduct of a son, in whom he has built up the bright and cherished hopes of life, he cared very little where he went, if he might seclude himself from the sight of the "ingrate" boy, and be safe from his pursuit and the importunity of his sure, future want. Mr. Sherman well knew that the course of extravagance, idleness and sin, which his son had chosen, would in a short time leave him in a dependent condition ; from this, he had some hopes of his ultimate reform. But alas ! what little hope of repentance well founded was there in his case.

Mr. Sherman was a man of sudden impulses, and of strong passions. At the same time he was unquestionably a person of very great affection, and was sure to feel its exercise in all its true force under the requisite and appropriate terms of it. Unlike some men of his peculiar temperament, he was universally regarded as a man of good judgment, clear views, and real benevolence. By the citizens of Crampton he was held in high regard, and had two or three times been sent as their representative to the General Assembly of the State.

The western part of New York, the northern parts of Ohio, and the country west of these points, was comparatively a wilderness from 1820 to 1830, between which periods Mr. Sherman removed from Crampton, so that he found no difficulty in locating himself in a retired position in the northern parts of Illinois.

Here he purchased from time to time considerable wild land at government prices, and lived to see even in five years a considerable tide of emigration setting in towards him, and even going beyond him from the East.

At this period of his sojourn in that country, he lost his amiable wife, who, in her dying moments, implored his forgiveness of their only son. Under the solemn aspect of death, all sublunary things assuming their true inferiority of regard, and duty imperiously attesting her great importance, the husband and the father, his heart truly yearning for his son, could not refuse his assent to this request. He promised her all that she required.

After her departure accordingly, he made special and earnest inquiries about him, and took all the necessary steps to restore him legally to his forfeited heirship. But great was his disappointment, sorrow, and chagrin to learn the whole history of his son and of his family, all of whom were reported as no longer living. Mr. Sherman never fully recovered from these accumulated disappointments and sorrows. He married again, however, a lady of excellent character, of affectionate regard—a cousin to his former wife, by whom he had two daughters, but was ere long removed from them by death.

By his will, he gave the whole of his property to his wife in trust for "all his children, their true heirs and assigns, forever."

*Mrs. Sherman, left a widow with these daughters—she*

being now forty-five years of age, with a very large landed estate, increasing yearly in value—found that the care of this property and the education of her children required the utmost diligence and exertion on her part. Unaccustomed heretofore to so much exertion and to so great responsibility, it for a long time sensibly wore upon her strength, and excited apprehensions that the daughters would at an early age be left orphans in the world. But these unfavorable clouds at length dispersed. She was able to perform her required labors with more comfort to herself, and with decided advantage to the young heiresses, as she was eminently fitted to give a guiding hand to the formation of their characters.

Chicago was now become a city of great extent and business, the pride of Northern Illinois—filled with inhabitants, evidently destined to be one of the most important and magnificent cities of the country. It was within the limits of this rising metropolis that a part of Mr. Sherman's estate lay, and the remainder was near by, every rood of which commanded a high price, every foot of that within the limits of the city valued at almost fabulous prices. Such has been the rise of landed estate in our great western towns and cities.

Of the Puritan Fathers, there never lived one who, we suppose, dreamed of the great West of that country whose eastern margin he beheld in glorious outline from the deck of the *May Flower*. The Puritans never saw the mighty lakes and western prairies of the land they took in possession. Stern and rugged men, they struggled for a century and more on the margin where they first planted cornfield and city, school and church. It was two centuries before Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, and Michigan were fully comprehended. The Indian and

the dark-haired bison were there, but not the early settlers of New England.

Well, it makes no difference ; we mean, it is just as well—as well for them, and as well for us—for the world. The good old Puritan came not here to buy government land at one dollar and twenty-five cents the acre, and to speculate in its rise ; but as the poets justly say—

“ He came to worship God ! ”

The generations long after his, spread themselves over the mighty West, and CHICAGO grew up a city of great renown, of wealth untold, of business unrivalled ; with an immense population ; of gigantic proportions ; the thoroughfare of travel from the East to the West beyond !

Of course we do not know why it was that here, rather than in some less favored place to realize a great fortune, Mr. Sherman chose to locate himself. But as his estate lay here, when the city rose and spread itself along the shores of Michigan, calling still—“ More room ! ” “ Room for us ! ” “ Room for CHICAGO, room ! ”—it attained to an immense value.

The two Misses Sherman—elegant, accomplished young ladies—both married during the lifetime of their mother, and according to her wishes. The husband of the elder daughter, Elizabeth, was a young and intelligent merchant of New York city. Her sister, Mary, afterwards married a lawyer of Chicago. It was strange if both these gentlemen were ignorant of the value of money. We suppose they must have been fully aware at the time of so grave an act that they were “ proposing ” to heiresses.

Indeed, both of these gentlemen knew well the value of money, and how to take care of the immense estate



now placed partially under their management, as the widow and the trustees wished them to assume some share of the responsibility attendant on its rapidly increasing importance.

We now leave this subject and return to our friends at Crampton.

It was James' frequent custom to visit Mr. Warren, from whom he was ever seeking to gain some new information respecting the early history of his parents. He also was frequently led to inquire about his grandfather and grandmother. Every particular scrap of information thus acquired, he treasured up in his mind with the deepest interest and regard, valuing it as above all price.

"Your father, James, when he left here, went to the West Indies, and he died there. We suppose he died there."

"What is the strongest proof of it?" inquired James.

"We had letters from the American Consul at Barbadoes to that effect ; his trunk of clothes and watch were sent home. Every thing had the look of truth about it, and we never afterwards heard it contradicted."

"Never?"

"No, never."

"How long was it after he left here?"

"Not a great while."

"Some months?"

"Yes ; a few months."

"Was the yellow fever raging there at the time?"

"Very much so, if I remember aright."

"Undoubtedly he perished," said James.

"Hardly is there a doubt of it. He was a bright and amiable boy," said the old gentleman, "but the force of

temptation overcame him, and he sinned grievously ; I have often wished that I could have known what were the thoughts and the resolutions of his last hours."

"Probably he soon sunk under his disease, and became lost to all personal consciousness, and so died—I fear it at least," said James.

"It may be so. But when I remember the prayers of his mother, I have hope in his repentance."

"What a singular and happy Providence it was," said James, "that my mother came here in her last hours. I am sure I owe you ten thousand thanks for your kindness to her, poor creature !"

"Oh, I owed her my love, James. I only did my duty. We were but too happy to comfort her."

"Your attention to her, nevertheless, involved you in a series of cares and anxieties——"

"The result of which, James, *you* in your own person exemplify and cancel. My last years abound with fruit I am daily eating to my high and increasing enjoyment."

"And I am happy that it is so," said James. "I am often thinking now-a-days about my grandfather. You say he removed to the West after disinheriting my father, and settled in Illinois ?"

"Yes, he did so. Your grandmother died there in a few years, and she obtained your father's forgiveness from her husband, on her dying bed."

"Yes! That is a matter which gives me the highest pleasure !"

"Of course it must. Your grandfather wrote a letter here, after the death of your mother, informing us that he had forgiven his son and removed the restriction of his claims to his property. But, as the answers he received must have been highly unsatisfactory to him, it

is probable that his property, if he had any, fell into the hands of his new wife, and so passed from you forever."

"And this is all that you know of him?"

"All—I have absolutely no knowledge of him further than this, for more than twenty years. I even do not know whether he is dead or alive, but my impression is—my memory is almost certain on the point—that he died a good many years ago."

"It is not possible, I presume, to find that letter which he wrote containing my father's forgiveness?"

"You may find it at the town clerk's."

Thus repeatedly they conversed together, James being conscious of an increasing conviction that the whole history of his grandfather was not yet unravelled. On inquiring there, he could find no letter at the office of the town clerk, nor any writing or record of any kind affording him any clue to the mystery, or any relief to his mind.

One day, when conversing with Mr. Warren on the subject, he was told that there was an old package of letters left by his mother at her death, which had been preserved, but never regarded as of much value, and it was difficult at once to find them. This was a new scrap of history for James, and with his anxious assistance in searching over the house, the package was brought to light.

What was his surprise and joy, as he diligently and carefully opened all the papers, when the very letter he was in search of came to light!

It read as follows—being addressed to his son, within an envelope to the post-master of the town :

"CHICAGO, Illinois, Aug. 17, 183—.

DEAR JAMES :—With a broken heart I resigned my home and its associations at the East, and came into this almost untrodden wilderness in

search of a new one, and associations that might give me peace of mind, and at least partial forgetfulness of my sorrows. But even here the recollections of the past have often arisen before me, and embittered the hours of my life. One cannot go away from himself. If his own heart is right, he may be comparatively as quiet in one place as another. My heart has not been right towards you, nor towards Julia. I will not say that the cause of my unhappiness might have been spared me, had my son considered well his own filial respect, and in all things made it his main object to please me—and I have carried with me a heavy grief, a mourning for my only son, that all my efforts have not enabled me to conceal. In addition to this, I am now groaning under a dispensation of bereavement by the work of death. Your beloved mother, the joy and solace of my life, who never cherished towards you a spark less of affection for your neglect, who accompanied me in my wanderings without a reluctant word, now rests in her last sleep.

But before your mother's death, she called me to her couch, and warmly interceded with me on your behalf for my reconciliation with you and restitution of your legal rights. . . . The same request had never before been uttered even in our most confiding and most mournful hours. She knew well her time, and waited it with patient confidence. In that hour then, under all the solemn sanctions of events that take hold on the future, I complied, and that most heartily, with all that she requested, and had the almost unearthly pleasure to see her smile her saintly approval of the act as she breathed out her last farewells.

On my own mind, also, there came directly a positive, sensible relief. I felt a burden removed at once from my soul, that I would not again endure for worlds! I hope never again to feel that crushing weight!

You are forgiven all that an earthly parent can forgive. Look to God for his reconciliation and love through the atonement and mediation of His only Son, Jesus Christ, the Redeemer of the world. Hereby I apprise you that the legal restriction to a claim on my property, under which I placed you by my formal act, is this day removed, and will never again, I trust, be renewed. You are to-day the only legal heir to my property. This, I beg leave to assure you, is increasing in value, as my real estate here seems to be located well. Give my love to Julia, and affectionately urge her to accompany you here whenever it may be best for the children.

I shall hope for an early answer, and in the meantime am,

As of yore, affectionately your father,

JAMES SHAWMAN."

What must have been the depth of feeling with which James perused this letter! He seemed to himself as standing within the spirit circle of his family, and to hear voices saying, one to another, "Lo! the lost is found, and we are again one!" He could scarcely contain his self-command; it seemed to him a letter of the utmost importance and its preservation in the circumstances of the case, almost as the special interposition of Heaven.

"How was the letter answered, Mr. Warren?"

"The answer to it, I have heard, was by the post-master."

"What sort of an answer?"

"A very unfavorable one, of course. Your father had left the country and was reported dead. Your mother was no more, and your two elder brothers were dead; these were the facts returned in the answer."

James groaned in the bitterness of his thoughts, and walked the room for several moments, struggling for composure.

"How came you in possession of the letter?" inquired James of Mr. Warren.

"After a long time, the post-master gave it to me, but he said, there was nothing further to be done in the case as he could see—Mr. Sherman, if alive, having doubtless willed his property to his second wife, so I put away the letter with the package."

"If my grandfather left property," said James, "it can hardly be supposed he would will any portion of it to his son James, or his children, after receiving intelligence of their death. At the same time, while it is probable that he did will it to his second wife, it is certain that he restored the legal and natural claim of my father, and it is not improbable, I think, either that he

made no direct will of his property, or that he did by will convey it, as is often done, to his wife, in trust for his children and heirs."

Mr. Warren assented to this view. He was warmly interested in it, and saw at once how valuable a relic he had preserved in case of certain contingencies arising.

James laid the whole thing open before Lawyer Ketchum. Lawyer Ketchum advised with Mr. Tools about it. All parties waited impatiently for the return of Mr. and Mrs. Rodman.

The subject itself formed one or two of the main items contained in his latest correspondence with his absent friends. And among other topics introduced, was the following :—

"We think more of the people are beginning to favor our cause. We shall carry the reform in the fall, I confidently predict. I have lately been on a visit to old Mr. and Mrs. Pepper. A more abject, sunken state and scene of misery and despair, I scarcely remember ever to have seen. The house of Pepper & Co. at the Falls Works, have made a very bad failure, and old Mr. Pepper is involved beyond all his real and personal effects, so that in perfect despair both he and his wife avow their necessity of support from the town. They resolutely refuse to purchase any food to eat, but beg it in small allowances from those who live the nearest to them. George Pepper, Esq., has thought it best, on account of the great excitement against him in the community, to leave town, it is said the country. When I called on the Peppers, they sat alone in their house trembling, pale, hungry and desolate. I endeavored to encourage them, and to convince them that something might be saved, enough to support comfortably their *old age*, but the attempt met with a perfect howl of de

spair from them. They accused every body of their downfall, cursed their son and all the company, imprecated the judgment of Heaven on the town, and on all business stock associations in particular. Then they bewailed the day in which they were born, married, and the life they had lived together. They concluded by bitterly reproaching each other, and by invoking the town to take them to the poor-house.

The overseers have been to see them—so has Mr. Siddleton ; and it seems to be regarded, on the whole, the best way to get along with them at present—at least to put them at Mr. Siddleton's, especially as Pepper absolutely affirms he is not worth a sixpence, and as they both refuse to purchase or prepare for themselves the first morsel of provisions."

\* \* \* \* \*

Agreeably to the expectations formed on all sides, Mr. and Mrs. Rodman, accompanied by Alice, arrived in New York about the first of September, where a joyful welcome and reception awaited them on the part of James and Mr. and Mrs. Haddock, who had accompanied him to the city. The party all soon returned to Crampton—James hardly giving himself time to see and hear any thing but the smile and voice of Alice, who seemed to have matured into a more thoroughly beautiful woman during her few months' absence.

There was great excitement and rejoicing at the safe return of their pastor and his family in the parish of Crampton. Hundreds of the people called on them, and congratulated them on having safely and so happily accomplished their tour. Every body praised their good looks, and many an invalid said he would like such a voyage himself.

They themselves were extremely happy to feel once

more at home, among their old, long-tried, and beloved people ; and Mr. Rodman, on the Sabbath, in his prayers and sermons, made frequent and affecting allusions to their separation, and reunion under circumstances that proved to them all the goodness and mercy of the Lord.

And Alice buried her face in her hands, and wept with mingled feelings of present pleasure and past recollections. How gladly was she here, in this dear home of her adoption and guardianship and love ! The wide and perilous ocean was past, the discomforts of the voyage over. But, then, the dear ones in the island of her nativity ! Alas ! should she ever behold again their homes, their countenances, and feel their embraces ?

Then came the assurances of that Gospel which is life and peace ; then fell on her ears the sweet promises of the Word of Life ; then rose distinctly in her soul the peaceful whisperings of the Spirit, talking of the things that are Christ's, and presenting them to her heart. Alice felt that all was well.

And Alice and James were dear to one another—dearer than ever before—dearer for all of earth, its joy and sorrow. Pledged, also, were they to labor for the good of their fellow-men, and to relieve the sorrows of such as were poor and needy, to whom were appointed the pinchings of want, the misfortunes and mortifications of poverty.



## CHAPTER XL.

A NORTHERN Doughface ;——— !

"It is a singular state of things any how," said Squire Ben Stout.

"Confound the old rascal—he's buried his money!" said Mr. Savage.

"Well, he will have a nice opportunity to live on nothing now!" said Tools, with a laugh.

"I wish," said Savage, "he might go hungry for a week—old c——!"

"He is a hard case," said Tools.

"A town nuisance!" said Savage.

"Queer specimens, both of them, of humanity!" said the Squire.

"How does Siddleton accommodate them?" inquired Tools.

"Oh, he put them into his back room, with five or six others, on an old bedstead that hadn't seen the outside of the house in five years, and told them it was the best he could do for them till Hicks died," said Mr. Savage.

"How did they seem to relish it?" inquired the Squire.

"They said it was 'better than they deserved,' I believe—old hypocrites! misers! confounded old money lovers!"

"Singular instance of vicissitude, Mr. Tools!" said Squire Ben.

"Remarkable, remarkable!" rejoined he.

"Shows the instability of fortune."

"Quite a plain case," said the lawyer.

"Well, what the devil is going to be done about it in the end?" inquired Mr. Savage.

"Oh! the town must watch closely for remuneration," said Tools; "and if any thing comes to light, just nab it—that's all."

"He has undoubtedly taken a false oath," said Savage.

"Well, he won't need to *vote* any longer—ha! ha! ha!" said Tools.

"No, he's safe *there*," said Squire Ben.

"And it is a queer state of things, too—only a month ago reputed worth three hundred thousand dollars, and a voter; to-day, a pauper and disfranchised. Queer, isn't it?"\* said Tools, bringing out his cigar case, passing it round, and lighting.

"Well, it is so, by George!" said Savage.

"The best and wisest laws sometimes seem to work unequally," said the Squire. "But it is right, gentlemen, that old Pepper should feel the law in the same places, as well as Sam White and Tucker."

"Yes, that's fair," said Savage.

"True," said Mr. Tools, "but I don't think much of the law any way."

"Don't?"

"No; what's it good for?"

"Why, who the d——l wants Tom, Dick and Harry, town paupers, round voting against the town?"

"It ain't certain they would."

"Ain't certain! Then there's nothing certain, that's all," said Savage. "Wouldn't they vote themselves better accommodations if they could? ha! ha! ha!—

\* Shows a strong case, in order to make the severity of the law apparent.—A.T.H.

Now I've got you, Tools—own up beat on that—don't be hoggish now, eh?"

"'Vote themselves better!' So, would *you*, perhaps, and Squire Ben and I, if in their places. Don't they need them?"

"Oh, ho! that's your dodge, hay? Well, suppose we should—suppose we needed them. I don't know as the town ought to grant them."

"Well now, just for argument, why not?"

"Well, we can't afford it!"

"Squire Ben, what do *you* think?" inquired the smoking lawyer.

"Oh! the case don't—it somehow—or other—don't exactly seem to—it don't look just right, you see, as it *is*—*nor*—does it look very well in any different form."

"That's it, Squire, out with it one way or another," cried Savage.

"You see, Savage, the town pays a good deal *now*."

"I know *that*," said Savage, "but that ain't the question——"

"True," said the Squire, "the question is if the town can afford to pay more to accommodate the paupers? I should rather—be—of the *opinion*, it can't."

"That's it, Squire. You've hit the nail hard, just as I knew you would in the end." (The fact is, that Savage had a tremendous influence over old Squire Ben Stout, and the town knew it. Nobody knew it better than Savage himself.)

"Well now, men," said Tools, knocking off the ashes from his cigar, "I'll just give you my opinion. I know the town *can* afford it; but I know also the town won't afford it till she's made to."

"Good! good! Tools! I go in for that," said Savage. "I don't know but Lawyer Tools has just about covered *my* idea of the thing," said the Squire.

"Oh! never mind, Squire Ben," said Savage,—“you hit the thing off about right yourself.”

“And do you say the town can't afford to do any better by the paupers?” said Tools. “Now, gentlemen, that's all humbug. The town of Crampton is as able to pay six, seven, and eight cents on the dollar as it is three. What is the tax on individual tax-payers, in reality? Why, what an insignificant affair is a few dollars a year, more or less, to secure a man all the liberty and protection he wants for himself, family, and property!”

“Well, for my part,” said Savage, “nothing with me goes so against the grain as heavy taxes.”

“You don't care how light they are!” said the Squire facetiously.

“Not I, Squire Ben; do you?”

“No, I can't say I do, exactly.”

“I love money myself,” said Tools, “but so far as taxes are concerned, I just make up my mind that they are always light enough, and pay over the tin as readily as I take my ale and cigars.”

“But the town always grumbles,” said Squire Stout, “if we go half a cent beyond the customary point.”

“‘Grumbles!’ yes, and they've a right to,” said Savage—“don't the town have to support every sort of a thing that any body like Haddock or Phillips or Ketcham happens to take a fancy to throw on it, such as schools, high schools, crazy folks, deaf and dumb boys, beggars, and such like, and pay for old bridges, protecting bad places in the roads, pay for somebody's falling off his horse, and somebody being at large? Why shouldn't the town grumble?”

“Sure enough,” said the Squire, “and so I was about to tell Lawyer Tools, that what was fun to him, was *death to others*. Ha! ha! ha!”

"That's a good idea, Squire, ha! ha! ha!" said both Tools and Savage.

"I know about as well as the rest of you," said the lawyer, "what taxes we can usually raise ; I was only saying that more might be put on us just as well, *if we were a mind to have it so.*"

"There's the rub!" said the Squire and Savage.

"But I think very little of the disfranchising paupers. It's making a good deal out of nothing, and exposes us to a good deal of hard talk."

"You went for it in the Legislature," said the Squire.

"Oh, yes, a man can't row against every body. I don't, however, think we really need the law, because the paupers are half of them females, and of the balance, two-thirds are too feeble to vote if they wanted to ; and who would ever think of putting in their names to draw a jury from? No," said he, smoking freely, "the law is worse than nothing. Just abolish the whole, and make a simple provision to take care of the poor ; that's all we want."

"I don't agree to that, by a great sight," said Savage. "Do you, Squire?"

"Can't say I exactly like it," replied he.

"Do you like, Squire Stout, to sell men and women who are as respectable as old Mr. Pepper——?"

"Don't call old John Pepper respectable, for heaven's sake," said Savage, interrupting.

"Oh! well just for argument say so, or Josh Hicks, or the old widow Prescott. Do you like it 'exactly' that we should have a law that effectually obliges us to sell them off as slaves, and disfranchise them? Don't we give our Southern folks a chance to talk 'Turkey' against us?"

"Well, let the Southern folks 'talk,' who cares for

them? Is it any of their business? Let them mind their own laws and take care of their own slaves, and of their own white poor folks. They've got enough of it to do," said Savage.

"Yes, and so they can say to us. Now, I think that one old pious white woman, like aunt Prescott, is worth more in the scales of reason and society, than a whole plantation of negroes, though I'm dead set against slavery," said the lawyer, lighting another cigar, "as you all know."

"Why, Tools, you're about half crazy," said Savage. "You know that our poor-house laws are as humane and Christian as they can be. We are every where in the Bible told to take care of the poor: 'Blessed is he that considereth the poor, the Lord shall remember him in time of trouble.' Now our laws don't contemplate a state of involuntary servitude. They merely make a kind and regular provision to keep the poor folks comfortable."

"I know all about it," said Tools.

"Well, you don't talk as though you knew any thing about it."

"I know what I'm talking about," said the lawyer.

"Well then, talk so other people can know too, ha! ha!"

"You do know it," said Tools.

"I'll leave it to Squire Ben if you dare," said Savage.

Now Tools had rather not, and Squire Ben had rather not; but there was no escaping, and so Tools said—

"Done! Leave it to him."

"Well, Squire, how is it?" said Savage. "Does Tools talk on this matter according to law and Gospel, so that people can understand him, or is he befogging the *whole subject*?"

"That's not the point, Squire," said Tools. "The point is, whether I know what I'm talking about, and whether Savage understands me."

"I don't care how you put it," said Savage; "it's all one. For if I don't understand you, how can any body else?"

"We all know, Mr. Savage," began the Squire, "that Lawyer Tools is good in matters of law——"

"Oh, yes, that's all clear," said Savage.

"Well, then, Tools must argue the matter *as a lawyer*, if he does at all; so that you and I, Savage, may not as well comprehend his lawisms as he does, and yet it be not actually incomprehensible, because he must reason from facts that are well understood by us. On the whole, while I think Tools is rather bold and free in his notions—and Tools is no man's fool, you know, ha! ha!—I should say he was not so far out of the way, but that you and I could at least get hold of about half that he says with a tolerable degree of clearness."

Savage studied over this decision with his feet and legs stretched out about two feet apart, with a hand resting on each knee, leaning forward and looking straight before him, at nothing in particular, for about a minute—the deep twist around his mouth, the lines in his forehead and cheeks, indicating some confusion of ideas. But at length, coming to himself, he exclaimed—

"All right, I verily believe, Squire, though I don't get hold of the whole case as well as I want to. But if I *do* get at it, you make Tools out, or if not Tools, you make yourself out a regular NORTHERN DOUGHFACE—ha! ha! ha!—by thunder! Is that it, Squire, eh?"

At this hit on the part of Savage, the Squire burst into a regular red-in-the-face, hearty old New England justice laugh; and Tools, leaning clear back in his

chair, with his face looking up to the ceiling, roared and laughed till the tears ran off his face like water, stamping with his feet, and clapping and rubbing his hands in the very highest kind of lawyer glee and satisfaction.

At length Tools started up and pulled out his gold watch. "Whew! wh-e-w! This won't do for me," he said. "I have a case to argue this afternoon, and a writ to make out for the sheriff. Is there any more business, gentlemen?"

"No, not exactly," said the Squire. "We must have a fight, I suppose, next town-meeting day."

"Well, we shall whip their eye-teeth out of them, Bacon and Stoddard to boot," said Savage.

"I don't know how it will be," said Tools. "We must lay our heads together, and pull all one way: they are moving heaven and earth to carry it."

"They can't do it," said Savage.

"They will try," he replied.

"Oh! they are clearly in a minority," said the Squire.

"It won't do to be idle and too confident," said the lawyer.

"No," said Savage; "watch them like dogs. They'll steal a march on us if possible; then look out for heavy taxes!"

"Hang the taxes!" exclaimed Tools, and left the office.

Now Lawyer Tools really knew that he was on the wrong side, but his self-interest kept him with his party; and he was, as Savage represented it, a good specimen man of a "———" NORTHERN DOUGHFACE; the Squire was another!



## CHAPTER XLI.

Miss FLUSH pays a visit to the Poor-House. She forms a high estimate of the personal charms and character of Miss Margaret Davis, and appears in what may be called a new character herself. So thinks at least Lawyer Tools, whose professional business leads him closely to scrutinize individual members of society in what changes soever they may appear.

WHEN James, accompanied by Mr. and Mrs. Rodman and Alice, made an early visit to the poor at Siddleton's, he was not a little surprised to find there, engaged in an earnest conversation with Mrs. Siddleton, his late controversialist, Miss Emeline Flush. He was no less pleased than surprised, for he believed that a half hour's visit among the wretched people would be more "convincing to her mind" than a fortnight of argument.

Miss Flush, however, colored a little at the unexpected meeting, for she had promised to make the visit with him. However, that was soon excused, and Miss Flush said she had gathered a great many very interesting facts in relation to the paupers, from her "obliging friend, Mrs. Siddleton." "We have not yet visited any of their wards, but were on the point of doing so when you arrived," said she.

"Very good ; if Mrs. Siddleton has no objection, we will all go with you," said he.

"You all know how it is, good friends," said she ; "we have them in close quarters, but it can't be avoided. We do not know how to make new apartments, and they are really uncomfortably packed. And then,

as you know is always the case, several of them are more or less unwell, which adds to the difficulty of giving them all proper accommodations."

So saying, she led their way up the narrow stairs and introduced them to the quarters of her charge.

Our friends were by no means strangers here, all, with the exception of Miss Flush, having several times before made the place a visit. But, when Miss Flush entered the rooms, the insufferably close air was very offensive to her; notwithstanding the outside door was swung wide open, she seized Mrs. Siddleton's arm for support: the whole company were much oppressed by it.

There was an immediate sensation among the group of paupers at the coming of so many visitors, a sensation of a pleasurable kind as soon as they discovered who they were. Mr. and Mrs. Rodman and Alice were well known to them now, and so was James, of course; and they gathered round them, or raised themselves up from every possible lounging position, and reached out their scrawny hands to welcome them; although some were bashful and afraid, and so eyed them through the creaks of the doors; and others were ashamed, and pulled together more closely round them their tattered raiment; and with feminine habit, Mag and others of the females with both hands smoothed down their frizzled and fugitive locks of hairs, or gave a new twist to soiled night-cap or head-dress, of what material or cut soever it might chance of. Some of them clustered in groups, looked over each other's shoulders and kept aloof, while there were others who walked right forward, easily and with great self-composure or confidence, and began a lively conversation.

*Such, of course, were Mag Davis, widow Prescott, now*

very old, aunt Wakeup, Mrs. Upham, Sam White, and Tucker.

"Well, I'm dreadful glad to see you all," said Mag Davis, with one of her long, skinny laughs, that was meant to prove the welcome her words expressed, but was to virtue and youth a terrible expression of withered innocence and expiation of the past. "Yes, come in," said she, "come and sit down, if you will. We are always glad to see you, let what will happen. Josh is very sick, sir, you've come just in time to give his poor soul a little light, hasn't he, Mrs. Siddleton?"

"Doubtless Mr. Hicks will be very glad to see him," she replied.

"Yes, he will, and so will sister Peters and widow Prescott; 'we're all poor critturs,' sir, and need the Gospel, so Dan himself says," continued she.

"Don't talk too much, Mag," said Mrs. Siddleton, mildly, "we shall see you all."

"Who in the world is that creature?" inquired Miss Flush, in a whisper, as she leaned heavily on Mrs. Siddleton's arm.

"Why, my dear Miss Flush, don't you know her? That is Mag Davis."

Miss Flush did not recollect ever meeting her before, although she had heard of her, and sometimes seen her wandering through the town.

"She has been here a long time," said Mrs. Siddleton.

"Oh, of course, Mrs. Siddleton, I don't wish to monopolize the talk," said Mag, "but I thought somebody ought to do the honors of the establishment!"

"You see she knows how to talk," said Mrs. Siddleton.

"It is surprising! And yet what a *dreadful* looking creature! I am afraid of her, and shocked at her appearance. Mrs. Rodman, do you know her?" inquired Miss Flush.

"Oh, to be sure ; I have often spoken to her."

"Mag belonged to a tolerably good family," said Mr. Rodman. "Her education was thorough, but she lost her parents early, became poor and idle, and, here she is—was it not so, Mrs. Rodman?"

"Yes, I think so ; I have heard something of her history."

Mag had now wandered off into her room, where Roxy was lounging on the bed.

Tucker, with his long, gray beard, and red, almost blistered whisky face, encountered the party, and hoped they were "all well." As for James, he went right among them shaking hands, chattering with all, and inquiring into their several circumstances. Every one stared after him as he passed on, and wondered how he got out of the poor-house, and Mag and Roxy said they were c—— glad of it, for he was head and shoulders too tall to stay there.

"And they say," said Mag, "he's courting Alice there. Do see her, Roxy ; here, you fool, peek through the door at her. 'Darn't?' Pshaw! you're jealous, coot, you won't. Ain't she tall and plump and handsome? Don't be a fool ; look at her and say 'yes.'"

"I see her—she's mighty handsome, I believe."

"That's it, and true. She'll make him as happy as a Frenchman."

"Pshaw! how do you know, old Mag?"

"You needn't snub me, Rox, Jims is no old beau of yours. He'd marry me just as quick as he would you."

"It's a c—— lie, you old trollope ; he's romped with me a hundred times."

"Much good may it do you, miss——. He'll marry that English girl, now, and she's as graceful as a swan. See her walk! And she's good too. See her shake old

granny Wakeup and widy Prescott by the hand. Hang it—but I'll go and shake hands with her myself ——," and so off she started, but first she encountered James, and seizing him by the hand, cried out, "How are you, mister James? We are mighty glad to see you."

"Well, Mag, how do you do yourself? I am glad to see you looking pretty well—'alive and hearty,' as they say."

"Oh! ho! the Lord keeps some of us on hand yet, ha! ha! but I am getting sober, ha! ha!"

"Now I think, Mag, you are about as young as ever in your courage; you don't give up, I see."

"Lord, no, it's Roxy that does that——"

"It's a lie, you wicked creature, and you know it!" screamed a voice behind the door.

"Whew! whew! old jealous Rox, I ——, ha! ha!" screamed the old hag, and passed on till she got Alice by the hand, and congratulated her on returning safe from her voyage.

"We had a fine voyage, Mag," said she.

"Yes, so Jims told me," she answered.

"Jims and you are old friends I believe," said Alice with a smile.

"Yes—ha! ha! ha! Jims and I and Roxy used to sit up nights and tell stories. He's a mighty tall, handsome chap now, ain't he, though, eh?"

"I dare say he thinks pretty well of himself," said Alice, with a smile.

Miss Flush came up, and Mag, not having seen her before, on being told who she was made a sidelong courtesy, and smoothed down her dress and hair. Miss Flush couldn't keep her eyes off from her. There was a smartness and singularity about her that attracted her towards the old creature, repulsive as she was.

Mag told her she had been a poor miserable being more than forty years. She was born well, of goodly parents, educated well, and saw good company in her younger days. She was now over sixty years of age.

"When I was fifteen I was cast an orphan upon the world ; and before I was thirty I had lost all friends—all home restraints—all virtuous modes of a living. I hired myself out as a housekeeper at the age of twenty-two to an old widower, who turned me off in six months, depraved and wicked. I have been so ever since, though, thank God! not always *as* wicked. But we are a poor, miserable set of outcasts ; we are *poor* ; we haven't any thing of our own ; no money, no clothes fit to wear, no friends to help us. We are cursed by the Lord with the shame and degradation of POVERTY, that has no other name for it so bad. May God have mercy on you, young ladies, and keep you from it all your days ! We are all dying as fast as we can, and hope it won't be as bad for us in the next world ; but—we don't know—we suffer enough, one would think, in this world, if that were any thing. But widow Prescott says our sufferings arn't the thing ; it is the sufferings of the Lord for us. Now how is it, Miss Flush, eh ?"

Miss Flush could hardly refrain from weeping as she took Mag by the hand, and told her by all means to heed the counsel of Mrs. Prescott, and to go and cast all her sins away, believing cordially and simply on the righteous expiation of the Son of God for salvation.

"Yes," said Mag, "we need just such a Saviour, I presume. For my part, I don't read the Bible much ; but Dan says we ought to, and Dan is becoming mighty religious now-a-days."

"Who is Dan ?" inquired Miss Flush.

"*That's* Dan in the doorway with a slouching hat on, sitting curled up so. Do you see him ?"

"Yes ; but who is he ?"

"Why, he's an old fellow of us—a State-prison chap ; one of the hardest old villains, they say, that ever was. Jims knows all about him. But he's getting as sober as a deacon now-a-days, and speaks and acts kinder."

"What makes him do that ?"

"Oh, he says Captain Bunce, who used to keep us—a rough, grinding old master—who Dan used to quarrel with a good deal, and Jims used to trouble all he could, (ha ! ha ! ha !) and get flogged for it. Didn't you, Jims ?" said she, as he came up. "Didn't Captain Bunce used to flog you within an inch of your life, eh ?"

"Yes," said he, "I believe so, Mag. But those days are gone by now : and the Captain's a better man, I hope, if I am not."

"I guess you both needed a little grace," said she, bluntly.

"You are more than half right, Mag," said he, and walked by.

"Well," says she, resuming, "this Captain Bunce is now poor, with a blind daughter, and they are both coming to the poor-house themselves. But the Captain tells Dan he's met with a change, and is willing the Lord should do with him as he pleases ; and he talks with Dan till the poor soul really seems to act like a different kind of fellow. But after all, how's a person to be religious *here* ? Do you know ?"

Miss Flush said they must all be patient, and commit themselves to God, who would, she had "no doubt, assist them, and by-and-bye make them much better off."

"Oh !" said Mag, "we expect that. Why, we should die right off if we gave up hope. Now, Miss Flush, we are expecting there'll be a great change one of these days, just on account of my dream——"

"Your dream?"

"Yes, a good many years ago it was too. Aunt Prescott thinks it will be fulfilled, and so do most all of us, for the dream was fulfilled about aunt Dodge, you know, and so we think this will be."

"What was it?"

"Why, that we were all liberated from these little pest-holes, and poor, short way of living, and put into a nice large house, where we had a sweet, good home, and every thing as comfortable as a body could wish—wouldn't it be good if it did come to pass, Miss Flush?"

Miss Flush breathed heavily, for she had opposed the fulfillment of this very dream a good many years, little thinking it was the hope and longing desire of those destitute and suffering ones by whom she now found herself surrounded.

"Yes, Mag," she said at last, "it would be a blessing indeed, and I think you ought to have something of the kind, I am sure." Miss Flush was feeling very earnest thoughts in her soul, thoughts of labor in behalf of these poor outcasts, God bless her!

"God bless you, Miss—perhaps we shall have. Now, do you go and see the old widow Prescott. There she is talking with the parson—do you see her, an old lady in a cap? And there too, is old aunt Wakeup, with her crutch, see them?"

"Yes, I see them—good bye."

"Good bye, Miss."

Passing the opened door of poor Hicks' room, she was struck with horror at his ghastly, dying look, and nearly opposite was the room of Miss Peters, who was languishing out her life also, though perhaps her danger was less immediate than his; her face was haggard and *sunken, its belle-beauty gone—its virgin life wound up*



near to breaking. Quietly, Miss Flush stood in the circle.

"We have but little life left to us," said the widow, "may it be passed in the fear of God."

"Amen!" said aunt Wakeup.

"We have seen a strange life, sir," said the widow.

"It has been an eventful one, indeed," he replied.

"All's right, though," said aunt Wakeup, "whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, you know?"

"True," said the widow. "The Psalmist says, 'before I was afflicted, I went astray.' We need afflictions."

"We get 'um too!" said aunt Wakeup.

"I hope they are rightly improved by you all," said Mr. Rodman, "for no one of us knows precisely what is best for him, and he should therefore endeavor to see the hand of the Lord in every one of his trials."

"Oh, to be sure," said the widow, meekly.

"I know it," said aunt Wakeup, bluntly, "and so I tell Mrs. Upham, who has just lost her children——"

"Lost her children!"

"Yes, the town have put them out to places, one has gone to learn a carpenter's trade, and the other to work on a farm——"

"Well, did she not approve of it?"

"No; she wanted they should go to school longer: they are only eight or nine years old. But the town said they had better go now to these places, and they would see that they had three months' schooling a year till they were twelve or fourteen years old."

"What did she say to this?"

"Oh!" said widow Prescott, "she took it rather hard that she couldn't have the boys longer with her, and provide homes for them such as she might approve."

"And don't the selectmen give a mother here that privilege, pray?" inquired Miss Flush.

"No, indeed, they do not," said aunt Wakeup.

"They always consult with her," said Mrs. Prescott.

"They do not force from her the children abruptly, so to speak, but they finally do with them as they think best."\*

"That is, I believe, the rule they follow," said Mr. Rodman.

"Well, is it not a hard one?" inquired she.

"We should think so," said Mrs. Rodman.

"I never saw or heard of the thing before," said Miss Flush. "And pray where is Mrs. Upham?"

"She is rocking herself in the chair there, and James and Alice are talking with her," said Mrs. Rodman.

"How really sorrowful she looks," replied Miss Flush.

"Mrs. Upham was a pleasant and happy wife, with a good home that was all lost by her husband's intemperance and gambling. She came here with those two children left her out of a family of seven sons and daughters, and it seems cruel to take them—still, *this* is no place for them," said Mrs. Rodman.

"You are certainly right," replied the other. "How I wish all odious laws were swept away, and every wicked custom of society abandoned! What dreadful woes have followed and rested on man, in consequence of indulging the vices you have named."

Mrs. Wakeup and widow Prescott now fell into conversation with Miss Flush, and she became deeply interested in their personal history as they gave it off to her, and in hearing them speak of their religious support in afflictions.

\* This shows how the law works in respect to children being separated from parents.—AUTH

Miss Peters said little to the visitors, but she groaned and wept, and hoped her days of suffering would shortly end. She longed to hide herself in the grave, the recollections of her "past life were too agonizing to bear." "Pray for me," said she, "pray! pray!" and covered her face with her hands.

On the side of a dull looking, narrow bed, in the west room, where a half dozen persons lived crowded into its corners and filling all its area, there sat both Mr. and Mrs. John Pepper, late "the rich old Peppers" worth their hundreds of thousands, the envy and abuse of money lovers and seekers, and disappointed worldlings, now *town paupers* of Crampton, penniless, wretched, friendless, clear down the ladder of respectability and fortune, broken on the wheel of misfortune.\*

They seemed ashamed of themselves—and what was worse, horrified with a sense of their condition—it had come upon them! The apprehension of a life of poverty had seized them at the last, and had come in all its severity without a moment's warning—save that every rustling of the leaves was one, and every rumor of trouble and tightness in the money market was another—yea, every want of life an admonition to expect the poor-house!

They hung down their heads in abject, dismal shame as Mr. Rodman came near to console with them; for it was one more proof in the series that they had fallen.

\* Read the following, which we clip from the *N. Y. Evangelist*, of July 23, 1857.  
—AUTH.

"LIFE'S VICISSITUDES.—There is an old gentleman in one of the city pauper institutions at South Boston, who was for many years the President of one of the largest insurance companies in this part of the country. He was for a whole generation the associate and friend of the Thorndikes, the Brookses, the Lymans, the Amorys, the Cabots, the Perkinses, and other merchant princes of Boston. He has insured millions upon millions of property in a single year, and is now, in his old age, maintained at the public charge."

Henceforth, all approaches to them to speak words of even Christian comfort, would be turned into the stings of scorpions, as demonstration sure that they had now come to want the very things they had through life denied themselves, though fully able to enjoy them. They could no longer, even in idea, boast themselves above other men; but henceforth poverty and haggard want were to them stern, unflinching verities. But Mr. and Mrs. Pepper, in every other sense than the necessity of poverty, had lived for years as paupers do. They had denied themselves all wantonness in delicacies; superfluity of even simple and daily necessities they carefully avoided; and their ever-earnest study, more intense in their old age than ever, was how they might reduce the cost of their most imperious daily wants. Still, it was not for love of these conditions that they thus wantonly and perversely fought against their natural instincts and in-bred desires. No! It was out of a grown-up idea of the dreadfulness of poverty, which was almost sure to overtake them—a cherished form of misery that became in them a thorough demon of monomaniac horror and trembling—a mere fancy, that made them personally cruel—an idle whim, founded in the apprehension of a state possible to them, but by no means probable—it being generally the result of intemperance, vice, extravagance, thriftlessness—that caused them to go hungry and athirst when others envied them their riches.

They were now, indeed, where they had ever foretold the certainty of being; and their state was one that the proud lover of earthly riches might comprehend with fear and trembling. Among the suffering outcasts of the town—the sick, the aged, the half-demented, the dying—all complaining; the hungry, ghastly, cadaver-

rous, slatterly, profane, and selfish—remnants of themselves, and relics of past fortunes and events ; a sorrowful pattern of what humanity may be ; a memorial of past offences—with these, in themselves a wheel of existence and of nature, whirling slowly round and on creaking axle—with these, the feared but unchosen companions of a gloomy old age, they now had fixed their last passing stage. No, it was no chosen condition, but a feared—to them a fated, fatal one. Pepper is disfranchised ! He can not vote at the next election ; he can sit on no jury ; he can own no property (as a pauper). Were he a State pauper, the State would pay the town one dollar a week for his board, *at the most* ; and were he to die, six dollars—*no more*—for his funeral charges.\* So it is a fearful thing to play with Nature's laws—to fancy them and fear them and forestall them. True, they may ; but it is also true they may *not*, in the severer forms, crush down on us their invincible destruction :

“ Yet Nature hath her day and power—

’Twere well to know these things ;

Nor risk the backward tides

That bear upon and rend life's firmest strings.”

*Dreams & Realities.*

When the party had been over to the poor-house precincts, and seen and conversed with nearly all the inmates, the last visit being to the sick room of the aged and suffering Hicks, Mr. Rodman offered up a fervent prayer in his behalf, and for all the poor people gathered there. The visit terminated, Miss Flush that very

\* One dollar a week seems, from time immemorial, to have been the extent of the allowance paid for keeping State or vagrant paupers. The State of Connecticut, by a recent act, allows the sum of one dollar and fifty cents per week for this object.

day evening, in an interview with Lawyer Tools, protracted a little more than they were wont to practice on the night, desired to know what were the real opinions he entertained respecting the poor and wretched inmates of the poor-house. And she perfectly amazed and electrified him by saying, that she had that day fully resolved, in her own mind, hereafter to befriend them to the last of her influence with both friends and foes. "So," said she, "if you are not their friend, you must be, you *will* be—I know I may say that!" And Miss Flush regarded him with a kind and winning smile. Lawyer Tools sort of nodded. "Hereafter," she continued, "I will befriend and help them, though it cost me the dearest friend that I have ever cherished." Miss Flush grew pale and trembled—Lawyer Tools was taken. He never was so frightened in his life! He ran for a glass of water—she regained her self-command, and Lawyer Tools, pressing her hand to his lips, swore by the love of years, he would go with her in her work of repentance and mercy! That very evening they fixed on an early day for love's consummation, so long delayed, and vowed together that through good and evil they would help each other in the path of life, a life to some of joy and gladness, to other some, of thorns and tears.

Miss Flush immediately set about a system of benevolence for the town's poor. She organized a society for that purpose. She was indefatigable, earnest, successful. Through her assistance and the labors of her associates, by-and-bye a great improvement was manifested in the condition of the paupers, and duly acknowledged by the town agent and overseers.\*

\* Appendix, C.

## CHAPTER XLII.

**SEARCH for Property.** Writers on Political Economy represent **LABOR** as the only source of wealth, for by 'labor all the wealth of the world,' as says Mr. Adam Smith, was originally purchased.' It is labor that gives value to all commodities and products. At the same time, what miserable creatures we should all prove to be, were it not for **CAPITAL**. We have it then, '**SEARCHING**' implies **LABOR**, and 'for property,' **CAPITAL**. We hope James searched a good while before he finally abandoned it.

WHEN Mr. Rodman returned from abroad, he and James and Lawyer Ketchum were often closeted together over the subject of James' possible interest in property at the West, left by his grandfather. And it was finally agreed that James and Mr. Ketchum should go out there and make inquiries.

On the fourth day after leaving home, they found themselves in Chicago, and read in the evening papers of that day, the notice of the marriage of ————, Esq., lawyer of that city, to "Miss Mary ———, daughter of the late James Sherman, Esq.," of that city.

That they were near the sources of information in respect to the object of their visit, they could not now doubt. In conversation with a gentleman of the hotel, Mr. Ketchum ascertained that the marriage to which he referred was a very splendid affair, got up in a style worthy an heiress of so great wealth, but he could not give him much further information. But the next day, both Mr. Ketchum and James called on a brother lawyer in the city, to whom they had letters of introduction, and with him they repaired at once to the office of the

Judge of Probate. They asked for the record of Mr. Sherman's will, having ascertained that he left such an instrument, and owned much property in and around Chicago at his decease.

Their attention was at once arrested by the phraseology of the will. They were satisfied of the validity of James' claim under it to a right in the property of his grandfather. After an ample provision for the benefit of his wife, Mr. Sherman left with her, in trust for his children, their heirs and assigns, to be delivered them on reaching lawful age, the balance of all his property, real and personal, to be equally divided among them. Whatever intentions he had in respect to his daughters, as the heirs of his property, the will was so worded that it could not but meet the claims of *all* his offspring, even were there any such, his natural heirs, much more all who were truly legitimate whose claims could be established. If this had not been the real desire of the testator, but if it had fully been his intention to give his whole property to his two daughters, Elizabeth and Mary, he would have said this in so many words; and taken in connection with his letter to the father of James, it was clear that he made his will to meet any claim that might possibly arise in that quarter.

They secured the services of the lawyer above referred to in their further proceedings, and laid before him all the proof they were able to produce in relation to the true identity of James. It was his opinion that the claim was substantial. He begged them to secure the opinion of another gentleman of great legal eminence in the city, familiar with questions of this sort, and were happy to learn that his decision was perfectly in agreement with that of the other.

*It now remained to see the family, and to present*



their claim—a difficult and painful task, as they knew it must be unexpected and thankless. Mr. Ketchum and the two lawyers waited on the trustees, and made known to them their business. The announcement of another heir to the estate, overwhelmed them with well-imagined surprise. It was communicated to the widow in the mildest manner possible ; but at first the shock was too much for her, and she begged her attorneys, before they proceeded further with their statements, to give her time to recover from her surprise.

The next day the business was resumed. James had not yet been presented either to the trustees, attorneys, or the widow. Mr. Ketchum, acting as his representative, held an interview with the widow and her daughters, together with their husbands. This was followed by another, in which all the attorneys and trustees were present, and the will was examined, and the new claim under it presented in full and investigated.

It was the opinion of the widow, decidedly expressed, that her husband had no idea of the existence of his grandson when he made the will, and that consequently he could not have intended to bequeath to him an interest in his estate. She fully believed that it was his supposition that he was, by will, giving his property to her two daughters solely. But she also frankly confessed that he had often spoken to her of his son, and lamented his fate ; that he had repeatedly told her he was reconciled to him, and had removed all his former legal embarrassments to property under his will ; that nothing would be more pleasing to him than to know that he had left a son who could bear the family name. But she said, in justice to his memory and to her daughters, she must have the very highest proof of her duty in the case—the very strongest, most irrefragable proof of the

personal identity of the new claimant, before she consented to his position as an heir. Her attorneys advised this, of course, as also did the trustees. But the opinion, in general, seemed to favor the application of the newly found heir.

Mr. Rodman was daily informed of the proceedings ; and at the request of Mr. Ketchum, accompanied by Mrs. Rodman, he repaired to Chicago. But before leaving, he secured several affidavits of importance to attest the claim—that of old Mr. Warren, one from Captain Bunce, and a very decided one from old John Tucker, corroborating in every respect the testimony of Mr. Warren. He also took with him sundry papers found at Mr. Warren's, and relics preserved, garments left by "Julia Carlile Sherman," with her name wrought in them, and a small locket containing a miniature of her husband. Purposely James refrained from visiting the widow till Mr. Rodman's arrival. He left the city, and went East to Cleveland. Here he intercepted his friends, and returned with them to Chicago.

Mrs. Rodman remembered that when she was a girl of fifteen or sixteen years of age, the present Mrs. Sherman had made her mother, who was her cousin, a visit, and she had always retained a pleasant recollection of her as an agreeable and rather fascinating lady. Accompanied by her husband she made a call on her at Chicago, but avoided any allusion to James or the subject in agitation, for she perceived that Mrs. Sherman seemed depressed in spirits, and that she carefully waved any approaches to it. Her visit was not very agreeable.

Mr. Ketchum informed the party on their arrival at the city that he was apprehensive of a law suit to recover ; that the parties made no progress in the settlement of the case, and the Shermans threatened to resist

the new claim. There was but one more step he could think of to prevent a trial, and that was to present James to the widow.

We have said that Mrs. Sherman was a cousin to her husband's first wife. She removed to the West in her childhood with her father and mother, but she had often seen and played with James Sherman, then a boy, five or six years younger than herself. She saw him once afterwards when he was about twelve or fifteen years of age, and retained a distinct recollection of his features. And accordingly when by appointment and consent of all parties—the trustees, attorneys, and friends being present, James was led into the presence of Mrs. Sherman. She recognized the family likeness in an instant. At first she gasped for breath, and clung to the arms of her children ; but as James approached her with a smile, and extended his hands, she sprung upon his neck, and bursting into tears, exclaimed—

“ IT IS HE ! IT IS JAMES SHERMAN HIMSELF, THE SON OF MY HUSBAND, OR HIS CHILD ! ”

The scene that followed may be better imagined than described. Of course the claim of another party to a third of their estate could not in itself be a pleasure to the daughters or their husbands. But the evidence of the justice of the claim was so overwhelming, they had no further desire to resist it, even though, according as it would seem to our natural instincts, where there is immense wealth, and enough, of course, for all, it is as tenaciously grasped as where there is a much smaller estate.

Mrs. Sherman advised her trustees and attorneys that she fully recognized the claim of James Sherman to an equal share in the estate of her husband, and directed them to act in the premises strictly according to the legal rights of all parties.

In consequence of this admission, James was awarded, as justly due him, out of the past income of the estate, over one hundred thousand dollars ; his future revenue time only could develope its great amount !

The news of these proceedings filled the city with astonishment, and James became of course one of the lions of the day. Before the party returned to Crampton, the papers there and in the vicinity were filled with the romantic story. The whole history of James was published in the papers far and near, and was regarded, as in truth it was, one of the most remarkable that had ever occurred. Next to his ruling passion, one that had grown with him into life, that of relieving human suffering, so far as he had the power to do it, James desired to throw himself and all that he had acquired at the feet of Alice, although he well knew that the gold of the richest mine, were it his to bestow on her, would be deemed as worthless, unaccompanied by a heart she valued for its faithful love.

## CHAPTER XLIII.

JAMES in the Town-meeting. Very humorsome times they frequently have in Town-meetings, there being generally present all the great men and all the small men of the place, not a few of whom offer their sentiments oratorically to their fellow-citizens, and the great men bow very low to the small men, and the small men shake their heads, look wise, and can't say precisely *who they shall vote for*.

THE annual meeting of the town of Crampton occurring at the usual time, the voters were highly excited by the pauper question, especially as both Lawyers Tools and Ketchum threw themselves warmly into the canvass in favor of reform, and others manifested much less opposition than formerly to the measure. Even Mr. Siddleton went with the new party, affirming that the death of Joshua Hicks, a man of such character as he had formerly enjoyed, and a man of learning and of great usefulness to the town—that his death in the poor-house, under the conditions of great personal distress and mortification, had opened his eyes on the mean and despicable character of the present poor-house regulations.—“And further,” said he, “it is but a week since we received into our premises a poor, miserable, squalid, drunken man, on the eve of starving, who now lies at the point of death, formerly a lawyer of keen wit and of great social reputation ; the son of a distinguished lawyer, a candidate for the gubernatorial office of his native state ; whose brothers were men of celebrity at the bar, or in trades and merchandise,—we received him on the state account, and now wait for his decease.

Here is one born and bred in luxury, reduced by the exigencies of fortune, (bad fortune attendant on his own follies to be sure,) to a condition or state of relief that might save a man from starving, it is true, but to one of humiliation and suffering far too great for the least remains of his sensitive nature to endure. Shall we not do something better than this for our miserable and destitute paupers?"

But it was uncertain how the thing would go. Speeches were made on both sides, and the house was very nearly equally divided in opinion. Mr. Savage went among all his party friends, and pushed them forward, inflaming their minds by false statements of the plans and movements of the reformers, and by promising that there should be a tax voted of one per cent. less this year than usual if they carried the town. "But," said he, "we must work like the —, or suffer defeat. Don't you see how they are plotting against us?"

Tools spoke against his old ally, and with great effect. Squire Ben Stout, as moderator, could speak on neither side, and so made the more merit of trying to give each party an impartial trial of strength. Mr. Armstrong worked hard with Savage. Mr. Haddock swung in his historical arguments, and Ketchum proposed inquiries that made the other party reel. But when the question came to a vote as to what course the town would take, it was so evident that a strong party yet remained to be overcome, the heart of the new-measure men grew faint and depressed. The moderator called the house to order for a vote, when a voice was heard from the other end of the hall, and a gentleman, more youthful in appearance than any who had spoken before him, but wearing in his features marks of the utmost firmness and decision—tall and dignified in his person—walked boldly

forward and addressed the meeting. We need hardly say that this was James. Murmurs of discontent and applause rose as he laid his hat on the table before him, and commenced a speech. But silence soon stole over the crowd, and people in the hall and outside the building all gathered in, and crept up on tiptoe nearer and nearer, as they heard his voice. Never had he before spoken in the hall on this question, and now had been returned from Chicago but a week. James felt the importance of the position he now assumed, as the public advocate of the cause of the poor, and that unless his speech should open the eyes and hearts of the opposition, again, as was most probable, would the town of Crampton be disgraced by selling its town paupers to the lowest bidder, to be supported for the year of our Lord 185-; and his whole spirit rose up to meet the foul injustice and oppose the wrong. He laid before the meeting a carefully arranged table of statistics, showing the cost of the poor to the town, as compared with some other communities where a different plan was followed, and that in those towns the income of the farmhouse system had been equal to the expense, and even frequently greater; and this, beside all the moral improvement, and the general health and good name of the institution.\* He showed how easily the same course might be adopted here, and the great good it would at once and in all the future accomplish. Then he argued

\*The reader will notice, in the Appendix D, extracts from a statement on this point, as published in the N. Y. Tribune, prepared by James Brewster, Esq., of New Haven, Conn.—a document of great practical value, and worthy of being read.—  
AUTH.

*Also*, report of an Address to citizens of Syracuse, N. Y., by Andrew D. White, Esq., copy furnished by Daniel C. Gilman, Esq., for N. Y. Tribune, Feb. 26, 1857. Subject, Mr. Brewster's New Haven Alms-House Experiment, &c. &c. *Also*, Extracts on same, from Springfield Republican, Jan'y. 13, 1857.

against the present plan, as grossly unjust to man as a human being ; its cruelty ; its inhumanity ; its unbounded selfishness ; its certainty of degradation and suffering.

"It is the last cruelty that can fall on a human being this side the grave," said he. "You put him there to endure all he can ere he lies down in his death sleep and expires, simply because there is no provision made to help lengthen out his existence ; you place him where he can never rise, but must ever feel the omnipotence and dishonor of poverty. And there, in this great dismal charnel house, where thirty per cent. of all your paupers yearly go to the grave, he struggles in vain to feel himself a man ; you disfranchise him, you rob him of his children ; under certain conditions only, and those not looking to the good of the individual but of the town, and therefore purely selfish, you allow him to marry ; you do not provide for him a good and comfortable home, but strive to procure a bid for his support that will save as much as possible to the town ; in all your arrangements for him, you look to a saving on the part of the town, and in every sense the working of the system tends to the degradation and intense mortification of the pauper. He cannot choose his own food, his own room, his own clothes, his own associates, his own employment ; he is allowed to own no property, to command no money. He cannot choose his own masters or keepers, but must go wherever the overseers of the town send him under a contract, of which he knows none of its conditions ; in effect, you make a slave mart of your Town Hall, and take bids for your slaves, not holding them up as valuable chattels worth round sums to their purchasers, but as poor stock—the poorer the better—whose value lies in their proximity to the grave, and of whom full thirty per cent. a year may safely be



calculated as falling off the bidder's hands. You place them where cruelties may be experienced daily, inhumanities that should stifle the breath to hear of, indecencies and vulgarities constantly forcing themselves upon the mind ; profanity and blasphemy cultivated into gigantic growth, and you deny your paupers Christian charity. The system as practiced has in it cruelties. Look here," said he, flinging off his coat and baring his arm, "I am one who can speak from experience. On that arm I can trace the scars of many a rawhide, of many a flogging which I carry with me to the grave, and I point you to them as evidence of the desperate cruelty of the plan. You degrade man—see yonder proof of it," said he, pointing to him as Tucker came blundering half-drunk into the hall, "and now perhaps he comes to tell us that the son of one of the first gentlemen of a neighboring State, lately sick in our poor-house, has given up the ghost, no one but his miserable companions near him to receive his last messages, or to render him the attentions dying men all need. Who of you will go hence to follow him to the grave ? Who of you attended the sick and dying bed of Mr. Hicks, formerly the public surveyor of this town, a man of great reputation, and how many of you went to his grave ? As it now is, your poor-house is little better than a highway to corruption and death. And well may every one of you who votes to keep it what it has now become, fear, that like as Hicks and Pepper have found it their old age asylum, so may you go into it in shame. Vote to continue your present poor-house system and to sell your paupers as slaves ! Well may every Southerner shout over you exultingly, and bid you first wash your own garments ere you complain of his. Do you say the laws that cover him are humane, and are framed



James shows the Sears



to protect his life and to secure his comfort? So may reply to you the owner of a thousand slaves—'I am forbidden to injure them—and am required to use my power in them for their good.' But laws secure not the object where the work itself is wrong. If you give men the power to exercise cruelty, what security have you they will not? If you sell fifteen or twenty of the town poor to a citizen of the town for five hundred dollars a year, i. e., promising to give him so much to support them, which is at the rate of forty dollars a month for the whole twenty persons; twenty-six dollars a year, each, or fifty cents a week, which is SEVEN CENTS A DAY! think you he will not make them work to meet the bill of their expenses, or reduce them to the simplest, cheapest, coarsest diet in his power?\* I know it all—so may you, if you do not already. You give the masters an opportunity to grind these people down to the very dust, and grind them they do, and will, if poorly paid, human nature remaining as it is.

I institute no comparison with slavery though I say this. It is not my object. Draw your own inferences. I have not time, nor is this the place to give you the whole history of slavery—American slavery—that great mother of abominations and cruelties in this our glorious land, in this free Republic, in this age of learning, refinement and religion. Let slavery be as it may, let the poor whites at the South be as they are, an abused, down-trodden people—still shall we in our free towns at the North, in our noble New England, be guilty of the meanness and cruelty of supporting this old past century pauper system with its crushing evils on the unfortunate? Will we tolerate the cruelties and sins of the system, and excuse them by saying, '*the laws are good,*

\* See Appendix, E.

*well framed, and cover the whole ground;* or even by pointing to the greater cruelties, and more abominable wickedness of Southern slavery? Will we be guilty of disfranchising a fellow-citizen, and selling him here in town-meeting before the ministers of our religion, in the sight of our best men, professedly Christian men, members of the churches in the town, the husbands and brothers of our pious and amiable ladies, our Christian mothers and sisters—in fact every man, who by law can do so, voting him no longer a free citizen, or worthy of his personal privileges,—will he do this simply because he is poor, and his necessity compels him to ask and to receive the charity of his fellow-men? Is this humane? Is this Christian treatment? Is it just? Will not the great Avenger of wrongs number against us this injustice?

Let us not hide ourselves under the specious cry, '*The laws are good,*—'*they expressly "say so and so,"*' when we know that the laws *give us directly the power*, give every town the power, to support the poor just as we please, and deny the privilege of any effectual complaining on their part—when we know that the towns will use their power *not* to secure the very best possible treatment and comfort of the paupers, *but to save themselves, as far as they possibly can, from the taxes that must be laid to pay the bill!*

Here is the ground of all the difficulty. Here it is—Let the laws be as high and pure as heaven, if you entrust their execution to '*MAMMON,*' he will nullify all their benevolent reservations and outlines. Yes, you must away with this opportunity of extreme selfishness, or, as our nature is, your laws will do little, if any good, the case.

Now we desire a remedy—a complete modification of

the system. We have the *power* by the law to keep the poor as we choose. So that *our* slavery is not Southern slavery ; but it is heartless, mercenary, voluntary in the highest sense. We may, we do discuss the question. We may, we can, we shall, I trust, change the mode and liberate these paupers from their present debasement. Hence the value, the true elevation of our freedom of speech and of action at the North.

I go for their entire elevation, reform, and civil relief. I am opposed to their disfranchisement. \* I would give them their liberty to vote, if of sound mind like other men, to serve as jurymen, if wanted, to marry if they choose, to have a positive influence in the disposition of their children ; and above all things, save them from the block of the auctioneer !

To do these things aright, they should be supported on an entirely different plan from what we now have. I am in favor of so arranging matters in relation to them, that every pauper may have an opportunity to earn money for himself, as a free man, his earnings being set down to his credit, and from this deducting his expenses ; and so in the town-house, as in the great outside house of the world, supplying man with motive and encouragement to personal exertion. Give him useful and appropriate employment and a home.\* Why not give him this encouragement ? Is it not far preferable to the rule that now crowds him down quick to the grave ? I say we desire a remedy. It is simple duty which the town owes to itself. Let us not be proud of modernizing and ornamenting our cemetery where the sleeping dead repose, while we are guilty of sustaining such an institution, so perfectly unhallowed and accursed as our corrupt and inhuman poor-house institution, where

\* See Appendix F. & G.

the *living* citizens of the town are driven in their old age, sickness and poverty, for support. *Why not truly support and comfort them?* And echo in her faithfulness answers, '*Why not?*' But selfishness yells out her infernal response, '*It is expensive, and I can't afford it.*' Away with this refuge of lies. Let us be true to ourselves and just to humanity. Let not the reproach any longer rest on us that we are faithless, and deserving each in his own turn, in himself, his children or children's children, the same bitter shame and experience that has now to be expiated by that unfortunate citizen of this town, of late worth his hundreds of thousands, and now so poor that there are none to do him reverence.

And hear me but a moment further, while I here pledge the town, and here lay down on the table, or in the hand of the moderator, the written proposition that if the town will now vote to raise the sum of five thousand dollars, in five annual payments of a thousand dollars a year, to purchase a town-farm, buildings, etc., etc., and raise and empower a committee to act with the selectmen of the town in the purchase of it and arrangement, and choose a town-agent to look directly after the affairs of the paupers, I will, and hereby do, present the town with the like sum of five thousand dollars—making ten thousand in all—to carry out, in the best possible manner, the design of humanity, benevolence, and simple justice."

The old town-hall of Crampton rung with the shouts of all the people when young Sherman closed. The young men of the town rallied around him; his friends congratulated him; a great sensation, lasting for several minutes, pervaded the whole meeting. Knots of voters here and there discussed the question—some even yet holding out; others giving in, and going for the reform.

At length the moderator, for the third or fourth time, calling for order, Lawyer Tools stepped forward and made the following motion :

*Resolved*, That in accordance with the proposition of James Sherman, Esq., to appropriate five thousand dollars to the purchase of a town-farm, with suitable buildings, etc., etc., for the home of the paupers of this town, provided a like sum of five thousand dollars be voted and raised for this purpose by the voters of the town now present ; the whole to be expended or appropriated as the town shall direct, under the care of a committee, town-agent, and the selectmen of the town—be it therefore *voted*, that this proposition be, and hereby is, accepted, and that a ~~tax~~ necessary to raise the first payment of a thousand dollars be now laid.

The moderator called for remarks. Mr. Savage said a few words and sat down ; nobody else followed. The vote was put and carried almost unanimously, only ten men voting in the negative.

And thus ended the slavery of Crampton poor-house ! Thus came to pass Mag Davis' dream ! Thus was there a Providence seen shaping the end of a poor boy, and making wealth the instrument of good.

It is the inordinate and selfish love of money that is its evil root.

If you are blessed with wealth, reader, go make it your instrument of good to those who pine away daily, sorrowing over crumbs and bones, while you are feeding on the fatted calf and on the sweetest loaves. The prayers of the poor are ever ascending to heaven. Oh ! let them be in thanksgiving for your mercy—not the imprecations of wrath for your cruelty and neglect.



## CHAPTER XLIV.

THE new Town Farm. Dreams take a high rank. Mercy mingles in the cup of Poverty. Reunion of old Ideas, nothing inconsistent with modern improvements and innovations.

THE work of years—the effort to introduce a salutary reform is oft the work of years, so slow are mankind to adopt new theories and practices for old, even poor ones—"the work of years" pushed on by men of clear heads, determined and benevolent hearts, was at last carried. Crampton, that for a long time had refused to her paupers the kindly attention and Christian care which their enfeebled state demanded, and that had even joined other communities in the unrighteous work of degrading them, either by a public sale under the hammer of the auctioneer, or by the private sale of the overseers, to the lowest bidder for the year, and so emulating or endorsing the high injustice of slavery itself—now placed herself on the side of humanity and truth. She voted to do to those who had no helper, the work of tender and merciful guardianship, and furnish them a home in their old age of bruises and poverty and shame.

"Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me."

"I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat ; I was athirst, and ye gave me drink ; naked, and ye clothed me ; sick and in prison, and ye came unto me."

"Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy."

"Then said the master of the feast to his servant, 'Go out into the highways and hedges and bring in hither the lame, the halt, and the blind.'"

"Go ye and tell John, \* \* \* 'The poor have the Gospel preached unto them.'"

"I am come to seek and to save them that are lost."

GOSPELS.

The work thus happily begun, went on. \* \* \* And now, who of all the citizens of Crampton so fit to represent it in the office of Town Agent, as James Sherman himself? It was tendered him, and accepted.

Here is then one redeemed from the miserable and degraded condition of pauperism, as alas! too plainly visible among us in our free New England, who in his elevation shows that society owes it to herself to burst off the fetters of the poor, and make them free; to give them the guardianship of a true humanity; to supply all their wants in the spirit of true Christianity, and a hopeful, peaceful end.

In the exercise of its commission, the committee made choice of a very fine farm that was offered them, situated a mile from the centre, having a large, commodious house, sheltered by wide-spreading branches of trees, occupying a pleasant, elevated site. The house might easily be altered to furnish much more room than at present would be wanted, and there were barns, sheds, and other convenient outbuildings on the premises to make the property very well adapted to the wants of the new tenants.

As it was immediately an available possession, the committee purchased it. The cost was five thousand dollars.

In a short time the poor were conveyed to their new quarters. Words would faintly describe the joy they

felt, the gratitude they manifested in this change of their condition.

"Oh!" said she, who had lived so long in misery, bending now over her staff, away up near the hill-top of mortal life—good old pious Mrs. Prescott. "True and faithful are thy ways, thou King of Saints. \* \* \* I have never seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread. \* \* \* My life testifies to the goodness, the long-suffering, the faithfulness and mercy of the Lord, and now I will sing praises to him as long as I live."

Roxy—poor, emaciated, demented, silly Roxy—half-witted—sometimes showing a sparkling line of humanity, and then a dull, uncertain glimmering of it; Roxy, believing in, hoping for, living to behold it, the great fulfillment of that extraordinary dream, of the wonderful wise dreamer Mag; Roxy sprang up and danced with joy, and clad in a neat dress, and placed in a neat room, with its cheap, but new and wholesome bed and carpet, its sweet little mirror, its washstand and towel, and all things necessary for comfort, was she not immensely happy? And Mag said, "This is heaven on earth."

Mag regarded herself as the prophetess of a new dispensation, and clothed herself with propriety and dignity, as with a garment. Mag swore she had said her last oath. She vowed henceforth to live a new life, and to study and preach the Gospel. The widow Wakeup said she was "now willing to depart *in peace*." She could now think to say her prayers; and they did her good, because she was not all the time thinking she might be sent supperless to bed. "For my part," said she, "I have been a very unfaithful Christian ever since I went to the poor-house, because I have had so little to eat, and so many other troubles: the Lord forgive me!"

Tucker didn't know what the d—— it all meant; but he believed in his soul it was "an improvement."

"Ye-ye-yes, it—it—it-t-t is *so!*" said Sam White. "The Lor—Lor—Lord's done—done—it, I *know!*"

"I just knew Jims wouldn't leave us," said Bill. "He told me he'd work out something for us afore he died, as sure as he was a born crittur, and so he's done it."

Dan says he can verily see a great deal more of the Gospel, and get hold of the Christian religion better than he ever could before. Somehow or other, the old ways looked to him like serving the d——, and they kept him in the dark, in spite of conscience and the Bible.

There was a great change in every one's countenance—a happiness in every heart longing for a day of jubilee.

James' attention was at first called to the improvements and necessary arrangements of the place, so that he was there almost every day. One afternoon of a mild day, near the close of October, Mr. Rodman, Mrs. Rodman, and Alice were with him walking about the grounds, when one of the workmen came and called James to the entrance to see an old man in poor raiment, who was inquiring for the town-agent; so leaving his friends, James went with him. Arrived at the gate, a man in poor, tattered clothes, leaning on a staff, who was perhaps sixty years of age, and looking older than that, bowed to him, and stated that he had been directed there to see the town-officer.

"I am poor," said he.

"Come in, my good sir," said James; "that's a plea we regard here; come in, and I will talk with you. Sit down on that seat, for I see you look fatigued."

"Thank you, sir; I have walked some distance to

day, but my necessities have compelled me. I am poor, sir."

"Well, I am sorry for that; we will help you if we can; we do all we can for those who are in want. If you are now in need of something to eat, or if you wish for rest, you can have it."

"I have eaten a little by the way, but am more in want of repose than of food, having walked over twenty miles to-day."

"Possible! You look too infirm for so long a walk."

"It may be, but I have frequently performed a longer march. In my life-time I have seen many a weary day, sir, and a great many vicissitudes of fortune."

"I think it very possible," said James. "We have here persons of all grades in life; their private history is remarkable."

"I have seen better days. My youth was fair and promising; I had kind parents; every thing to make me happy; my misfortunes have been brought on me by myself. Now I am probably near the end, and I regret my former ways."

"Life," said James, "is always teaching us a lesson. We live to learn in the passing years, how much we have done amiss and to repent, often when our repentance is at so late an hour, we cannot enjoy it as we would. But I hope your good days may yet be many; see, here is a cup of our fresh, cool water! Thank you, John! Now just gather up the limbs and bushes you have been trimming off, and throw them together in the yard—will you?"

"Yes, sir," said the man, and walked away.

"Have you ever been here before?" inquired James.

"Yes, sir; I suppose this is my native place. I have been from it, however, a good many years; every thing seems new—I scarcely see a face I know."

"And do you propose to apply to us for support?" inquired James.

"I have thought I must, for I am now old and poor, and my means of support are all gone—I have no friends, and you see how I am clothed."

"Have you any legal settlement in the town?"

"I don't know that I have ever lost it, except that I have resided in foreign parts—not in any other State in this country."

"You have been out of the country—abroad?"

"Yes."

"How long?"

"A good many years—thirty or forty."

"And Crampton is your native town?"

"It is."

"Well, please to sit here a few moments. I must see some gentlemen on business who have come on the grounds, and I will then return here. Make yourself easy."

So saying, James hurried away, and soon returned up the walk accompanied by our old friends, Squire Ben Stout and Mr. Haddock. Soon Mr. and Mrs. Rodman and Alice joined them, and James pointed out to the company the improvements they had made in the walks and shrubbery.

"We have a fine ground here, Squire Ben!" said James.

"Very! very! It is an admirable spot—just the thing," said the Squire, who at the same time, as he now stood very near him, noticed the stranger start involuntarily at the mention of his name and the sound of his voice, and also that he was intently surveying him.

Squire Ben, however, did not at first pay much atten-

tion to him, but he said to James—" Who have we here, sir ?"

" He is a stranger, a sufferer. He may need aid from the town," said James.

Squire Ben regarded him a moment with interest. " Mr. Haddock !" said he.

And the stranger started again, and fixing his eyes on the two gentlemen, rose to his feet, still leaning on his staff.

" Mr. Haddock !" said Squire Ben, " who is this ?"

" Pardon me, Squire," returned he, " I do not know. He appears truly to be a person in want."

But the Squire's attention was not lessened by this reply. He turned the eyes of the company on him by saying—" There is something in the man, that seems familiar to me."

" I see, Squire Stout," said the poor man, " that you recognize something in my features, sorrowfully worn as they are by the sins and toils of my life, that reminds you of the past. And do you, George Haddock, see in me any thing that you can recall or recognize ?"

" Something, perhaps, in the voice has a familiar sound—I do not notice any thing further——"

" But, good Heavens !" exclaimed the Squire—" for God's sake—is it so—or am I mistaken, are you dead or alive ? What on earth ! speak again, sir ! what, in the name of all the marvellous—what does this mean ?" and he grasped the stranger by the hand. " Haddock ! Haddock ! what, don't you see—James ! JIMS, for God's sake, where are you, Jims——?"

" Why, here I am ! Squire, what do you mean ? Speak ! What is all this ?"

The Squire dropped the hand he had grasped—" *James,*" said he, " *by Heaven, this is your father !*"——

With a shriek of wild amazement, mingled with moaning and affection, the son fell on the neck of the stranger—himself bewildered now—yet stranger no longer—his long-lost FATHER. And they wept together firmly locked in each other's arms. And around them was nothing but surprise and weeping—even the workmen left their labors and the inmates ceased their strolling, and all gathered round, and flocked together, weeping and rejoicing.

The father and son were almost borne together by their friends to the house, who now entreated them to be calm.

"Take off that accursed robe of poverty and wretchedness—take it from him!" cried James. "He shall want no longer! And if there's a fatted calf on the farm let it be killed; and we will have music and dancing, for the lost is found. My FATHER who was dead is alive again!"

Nothing like this had ever before transpired in Crampton; nothing ever before so stirred up the feelings of surprise in its inhabitants, or produced a more joyful and tearful set of emotions and sympathies.

Long explanations followed—too long for us to repeat them. We simply say that Mr. Sherman, (for it was he,) having survived the attack of fever in the West Indies, and wishing to produce the impression at home of his death, had, with the aid of a fellow-sailor, practiced deceit on the American Consul, Mr. H——s, at Barbadoes, and shipped for Calcutta. Here he fell into ways of life agreeable to his present views and customs, and suffering extremely, enlisted in the service of the East India Company. He continued in the British army there ten years, when, being severely wounded in an engagement in a hard battle with the natives of one of the in-



terior provinces, he was laid by from further garrison and camp duty, and transferred, after two years, to the navy. Here he remained six or eight years, and was at length released through the agency of the American Consul at Calcutta. He subsequently sailed to the Pacific, and after three years returned again to that port, where he engaged a passage to his own country. On the passage he was wrecked on the African coast ; and it was a long time, at least two years, before he found an opportunity of escape. When he did, it was by a vessel bound to the East ; and it was three years before he finally reached New-York, sick, dispirited, and without any money to pay his ordinary expenses.

In this situation, he made an effort to reach his native town. Enfeebled by disease, lame, wounded, destitute of money, he begged his way from town to town, or gladly received the aid that common humanity proffered him, gazing ever earnestly for a sight of his early home. A stranger told him, as he entered the town, that the poor-house was situated where he had found it, and no one had mentioned to him the name of the agent.\*

We have little more to say. The arrangements of the town for the support of the paupers gave almost, if not, universal satisfaction. The number of paupers diminished under the new treatment, as it was found to contribute largely to their elevation and improved condition generally. The effect on the funds of the town was such as to convince the most sceptical that it was peculiarly a great gain.

The good old widow Prescott, after a short time, died

\* Appendix H.

in an unexpected hour, her strength suddenly failing, as the very aged often die ; but her mind failed not till near the last moment. Among her weeping companions, her head supported by James, while Rev. Mr. Rodman offered up a prayer for her departing spirit, Mr. and Mrs. Haddock, and one or two deacons and brethren of the church present, she closed her eyes on the world of trials, faith, and patience, and, as we believe, went home to the bright world of fruition, glory, and song. Every one of the paupers who was able went to her grave and saw her buried. This was a new thing to them. They began to see the difference in their condition, even at funerals ; and being dressed like other people, they were not ashamed to walk among the graves, to answer questions, and to speak to those who accosted them. They could not avoid thinking it was a handsome thing to be decently buried ; to see a good many people at your grave—i. e., at your companion's grave ; to be thought a human being worthy of a burial notice, and perhaps a marble slab in memory of one, as at least belonging to the great race—the HUMAN people.

Captain Bunce was employed by James and the overseers to assist in the care of the poor. He regained the confidence of all who had formerly known him, and became very useful in the position assigned him. Henrietta, failing day by day, yet rejoicing in the kind provision made for her father's comfort, at length found rest from all earthly sorrows in the grave.

So, one after another, dropped from off the Life Book on earth these aged and infirm men and women—with many it being true that their last were their best days. Pray God that they all—yea, that we ourselves all—may be found on the Book of Life Eternal in the

Heavens—our home there in that house not made with hands!

The venerable Mr. Warren was, soon after the events we have now described, gathered to his fathers.

\* \* \* \* \*

“For the needy shall not always be forgotten ; the expectation of the poor shall not perish forever.”—  
PSALM 9 : 18.

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ITEM.

MAG DAVIS—One word about her and a singular coincidence. Interested in her personal character, my readers must devour with eagerness a precious *morceau* like this, which, I confess, should have appeared earlier in this little drama. Mag Davis—don't deny it, ladies, and say that Queen Victoria, or the Empress Eugenia were the first to discover and apply them—no such thing. Mag Davis, beyond all reasonable doubt, was the first one to discover and apply that world-renowned appendage to female attire, called HOOPS. The apparatus was of course in her hands, rude, consisting of wooden hoops from old casks. But it answered the object, and Mag adopting, Roxy imitated and pursued the fashion: SO IT SPREAD. The imitators and disciples of Miss Margaret Davis are now the universal daughterhood of Eve.

This may seem to you, my readers, trifling with a serious, money-making business and custom, (and every body knows that *hoops* are the envy of all men!) but I mention it on account of a remarkable coincidence, which is, that this fashion (which now pervades the world, and has swept the hats of every gentleman, how fine soever the beaver, out of all the aisles of the churches in Christendom!) which will undoubtedly END *in the poor-house, should have had its ORIGIN there.*

\* \* \* When we last heard of Mag Davis she was in a brown study, moody, and complaining. She said she had long since lost sight of her own invention, and had altogether abandoned it. Alas!—yet such is often the fate of Genius.

## APPENDIX

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A.—p. 230.

### CURIOUS FACTS.

Certain inhabitants of Moretown, Vermont, says a Boston paper, in order to rid the town of the support of a pauper cripple, feeble in body and mind, induced a man to marry her by the payment of \$60 in hand and the promise of \$40 in addition. It appeared that the would-be, or hired husband professed to entertain a special spite against the town of his own legal settlement, and hoped that he should, by the marriage, impose the burden on them. The ceremony took place, and the parties lived together about three weeks, when the husband abandoned the wife, in consummation of his original purpose. On her petition for a decree of nullity, the Court held that the transaction was wanting in all the essentials of a valid marriage. It was a sham and pretence; and in regard to the petitioner, it was a most flagrant and disgraceful fraud.—*N. Y. Sun. Jan. 8. 1857.*

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B.—p. 234.

### ANSWERS GIVEN TO QUESTIONS PUT BY THE AUTHOR.

**I. Question.** "What civil rights do they lose, if any, in becoming paupers?"

**Ans.** "The right to vote, and to hold property as against the town which supports them."

**Question.** "Can they vote?"

**Ans.** "No."

**Question.** "Can they act on a jury?"

**Ans.** "No."

**Question.** "Can they own any property?"

**Ans.** "No."

*Question.* "Can they, if they have children, direct when and where they shall be apprenticed out?"

*Ans.* "No."

*Mass. Law.* Answers given by D. B., Esq., an Attorney residing in the State.

II. *Question.* "What civil rights do they lose?"

*Ans.* "Jurors must be freeholders: they cannot act as jurors."

*Question.* "Can they vote?"

*Ans.* "Yes."

*Question.* "Can they own any property?"

*Ans.* "If they relinquish their support as paupers, they can."

*Question.* "Can they legally marry?"

*Ans.* "Yes: But when the overseers of one town fraudulently procure a male pauper of another town to marry their female pauper, such marriages have been annulled."

(I believe the overseers of the poor always object to paupers marrying where the said marriage will be a burden to the town. They do not oppose the marriage of a woman who is on the pauper list, to a man who is a freeholder, or who will take her away to another town. AUTHOR.)

*Question.* As to children? *Ans.* As before.

*Vermont Law.* Answers by L. G. M., Esq., and J. D. B., Esq., attorneys residing in the State.

By the laws of Connecticut, Judge O—— of New Haven, and Judge E. R. F. of the same city, informed the writer, formerly paupers could not act as jurors, because required to be *freeholders*, which restriction was now removed.—Pauperage itself does not disqualify for voting. But children are not under the direction of their parents. The usual marriage restriction prevails in Conn. Paupers cannot there choose their own mode, or place of support. Neither can they select their own masters. They are often kept on poor fare in miserable houses.

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C.—p. 447.

Judge T. B. Osborne, of New Haven, Conn., informed me that three towns, including the old and respectable town of Fairfield as one of them, combined together and built a *poor-house* for their common use. Here he said the utmost filth, vice and wretchedness prevailed. Sev-

eral children, in the most squalid, degraded condition, were kept there, and no body would tolerate one of them in his house. At length two ladies determined to investigate the matter and attempt its reform. They made a visit to the poor-house, and such was their report of its condition that the town took up the matter and voted it a nuisance, and broke up the establishment. The ladies then took these children, washed them, dressed them, took care of them, and applying for it to the legislature, obtained an act incorporating their society as the Female Benevolent Society of Fairfield, (I think.) The town also voted to give them the amount it had formerly paid for the support of the poor. They went forward with their benevolent enterprise, and soon had the happiness to see the whole system of squalid pauperism, especially in respect of children, entirely run out. The children were placed in good families, the best of families. Mrs. O—— herself brought up one of them, a young girl, who married afterwards one of the most respectable and intelligent men in the county. The wife of the Hon. R. M. S., brought up several of them, who were afterwards among the finest women in that vicinity. And one excellent result of this movement was, almost totally to put an end to all such vagrancy and pauperism in the town,—AUTH.

Mr. Brewster says of the Alms House in New Haven: "Provisionally I visited the Alms House, and found it in a miserable condition—three-fourths of all the inmates having been brought there directly or indirectly by intemperance, and they still had access to strong drink. Not only this; it was a brothel; many had been confined there for licentiousness, and the evil was continued in the place designed for reform. But more than all, I found more than a score of children, some of whom were the offspring of the inmates, and many were orphans indeed.

The condition of all was deplorable. No stated or uniform worship was held on the Sabbath; and the instruction of the children, if instructed at all, was conducted in the most loose and indifferent manner."

Mr. Brewster's Private Journal.—AUTH.

Mr. Brewster advocated at the town meeting his plan of improving the condition of the inmates, and was met generally by jeers and rebukes, and especially when he asked for an additional tax of *one cent on the dollar* to effect his plans.—AUTH.

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D.—p. —.

The writer proposed questions which were answered by L. G. Mead, Esq., J. Dorr Bradley Esq., and O. Smith, Esq. of B——, Vt., to this effect——

*Question.* "Are the paupers any direct tax on the town, as you keep them?"

*Ans.* "The farm cost \$2,500. Its interest is no otherwise realized than being thus applied. The superintendent has a salary of \$200. Some years a trifle is saved towards the next year's wants or improvements. At other times the expenses slightly overrun the earnings.

*Question.* "Were they not formerly a direct tax on the town?"

*Ans.* "They formerly cost nearly (not quite) \$1,000 per annum."

*Question.* "Does the present mode work more beneficially to the paupers as well as more profitably to the town, than did the old method of keeping them?" (i. e. by sale, contract, private agreement.)

*Ans.* "Much, *very* much better for both."

*Question.* "Is the old method entirely or but partially abandoned?"

*Ans.* "Only partially, but the change is progressing."

*Question.* "In what manner were they formerly kept?"

*Ans.* "By contracts with persons to board and clothe them, each being sold separately, and by contract with the Doctor for medical attendance for the whole.

Says James Brewster, Esq: "In the year 1825, my attention was called to the subject; and at our annual town meeting of that year I asked an appropriation for improving the condition of the Alms House, and gave my views in full. A committee was appointed, who, after an investigation of the matter in all its relations, reported in favor of my proposition, and the appropriation was granted. *The moral and physical improvement of the paupers were considered as indissolubly connected*, and it was recommended that suitable employment should be found for all.

The improvements were effected as speedily as possible, and labor suitable to the ability of the inmates was introduced in all the departments. Those most able were employed in farming and horticultural pursuits, and the products were sent in their season to market, where they found ready sale.

The beneficial effects were soon manifest, not only in the improved condition of the inmates, but in the decrease of the expenses of their

support. Although the population of the city at that time was (less than) but about seven thousand, the annual cost was about \$5,000. The improvement has been progressive; and though we have now some thirty-three thousand inhabitants, yet for many years past the income has exceeded the expenditures.

As a moral duty, no one should be indifferent to the condition of the poor; for such are the vicissitudes of human life, that many of the descendants of those who once rode in their coaches through Broadway are now inmates of an Alms House."

Mr. White in his report, says of the new Alms House and farm at New Haven:

"Ninety acres of land were bought about a mile and a half from the centre of the city, and a new Alms House erected. The land cost \$100 per acre, the buildings \$15,000. Soon after this, expenditures were made for farm buildings and stock, beside 150 acres of wood land, which brought the whole outlay nearly to \$30,000. Much objection was raised against these appropriations, but it proved a most fortunate investment, as in consequence of the advance of the city in that direction, the farm of 90 acres could now be sold for more than four times its original cost.

#### COMPARATIVE ECONOMY OF OLD AND NEW SYSTEMS.

"From the year 1811 to the year 1820 inclusive, the expenditures of the town for the support of the poor in the Alms House alone was \$42,902, or about \$4,300 a year. This was under the old system, with all its folly, laziness, filth and licentiousness; and as the population of New Haven was then 6,000, we may infer that under a like system, to-day, now that the population is 30,000, the yearly expenditure would be over \$21,000. But under the present system, with its stately edifice, its fine farm, its neatness and home-like comforts, the institution proves not only self-sustaining, but actually a revenue to the town. Expenses from 1852 to 1856 inclusive, 5 years, \$14,075.50. Receipts for the same period, \$15,539.68! The success of this reform is triumphant."

In the Springfield, Mass. Republican, Jan. 13, 1857, we read as follows, (the article by the editor is a review of Mr. Brewster's letter to the N. Y. Tribune on Pauperism.)

"The New Haven policy is that which is aimed at in Massachusetts, in connection as well with the reformatory as the charitable institutions, but without the same success. The State paupers are



a heavy tax upon the commonwealth, and the town paupers upon the towns. \* \* \* \* The aim to make every pauper establishment, so far as possible, a self-supporting one, is a humane aim as well as one which best consults a sound public policy. \* \* \*

Thus there is essentially no pauperism in New Haven. The City takes those who are not all able to manage for themselves, and managing for them, places them where they can earn their own living. In other words, the pauperism of New Haven is a self-supporting institution."

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E.—p. 459.

From returns to the General Assembly of Connecticut, in May, 1852, by a committee on the subject of State and Town Paupers, it appears that there were in 1851, in 134 towns from which reports were obtained, (there being 15 other towns that gave no answers,) 3,680 paupers in the State. These were kept in 37 Alms Houses, and 96 Poor-Houses, and other places as circumstances made it desirable.

From these returns, which must be regarded as authentic, inasmuch as they were given by the proper authorities of the several towns, it appears that in the year 1851 there were actually reported 3,680 paupers, and the remaining 15 towns would probably swell the number to 4,000. We find in these papers, prepared with much care and printed by order of the General Assembly or Legislature, of that state, that—

In Hartford County :

There were in the town of Avon, 12 paupers, costing the town per year \$240, i. e. \$20 per year for each pauper, or 5-2-3 cents each per day. How many crackers would this buy?

WINDSOR, same county, 56 paupers, cost \$338.56 : each per year \$14.97, per day 4 1-10 c.

In New Haven County :

BRANFORD, 17 paupers, cost \$493.29 : each per year \$29.00, per day 7 9-10 c.

In New London County :

GROTON, 22 paupers cost \$492 : each per year \$22.36, per day 6 1-10 c.

In Fairfield County :

HUNTINGTON, 25 paupers cost \$400 : each per year \$16.00 : each per day 4 1-3 c.

WILTON, 24 " " \$490 : " " " \$20.41 2-3 " " 5 6-10 c.

WESTPORT, 40 " " \$620 : " " " \$15.50 : " " " 4 1-4 c.

In Litchfield County :

BARKHAMSTED, 34 " " \$500 : " " " \$14.70 : " " " 4 1-10 c.

In Middlesex County :

HADDAM, 32 paupers " \$497 : " " " \$15.53 : " " " 4 1-4 c.

In Tolland County :

VERNON, 30 paupers " \$680 : " " " \$22.66 : " " " 6 1-4 c.

In Windham County :

POMFRET, 14 paupers " \$350 : " " " \$25.00 : " " " 6 4-5 c.

BROOKLYN, 19 " " \$460 : " " " \$23.68 : " " " 6 2-5 c.

Some of the towns mentioned in the report from which we make up this little *morceau*, gave more than those we have mentioned. The average cost here is less than 7 cents each per day.\*

According to the United States census of 1850, there were in Conn. supported in whole or in part for the year ending June 1st, 2,337 paupers. This is, I think, far below the truth.—AUTHOR.

From the same returns, Massachusetts is represented as supporting but 3,712 paupers, but by the Mass. State Returns in 1856, there were 21,102 paupers relieved in whole or in part.

In Massachusetts:

NORTHAMPTON, with a population of 5,278 souls, 38 were wholly relieved, 16 partially—costing \$633; 17 of those relieved were by the Masons and Odd Fellows.

From the census we also gather this remarkable fact, viz., that in the ten years from 1843 to 1853, the order of Odd Fellows had paid to relieve its poor and sick members an aggregate of \$3,023,22½!

The census also shows that whereas much relief has been granted to the poor by Ladies' Sewing Circles, by Widows' and Orphans' Societies, by Churches, viz., Cong., Bap., Meth., Episco., Pres., Religious Societies in General, Sons of T., Daughters of T., Masons, Hibernian Societies, Odd Fellows' Lodges, Fuel Societies, City Missions, &c., &c., these have been *generally*, (not always,) but in the great majority of cases, given to relieve the *partially* poor, not the absolute paupers.

\* The report closes as follows:

"This subject viewed in any of its aspects, is one of great interest and importance to the people of this State. In a pecuniary view alone, the annual expenditure of nearly one hundred thousand dollars, demands a scrutinizing and vigilant attention; but in its moral and social aspects it makes upon us a far higher demand. For He, who created man in His own express likeness and image, hath ordained to him other and deeper wants than those he feels in common with the brute. Neglect may leave the skin to be shrivelled with cold, and the stomach to be pinched with hunger; but the heart and the spirit may be left to a keener and a deeper suffering still; and any system of Charity which merely provides for the sufferings of the former, entirely regardless of the latter, is hardly worthy of the name.

Mere food and raiment are not enough. The virtuous aged and infirm should be fostered with respect, and in substantial ease and comfort; the sick should have kind and careful ministrations; the able should be required to labor for the common support according to their real strength and ability; the young should be properly trained and educated, and all should be surrounded by a genial, moral, and social home influence."

A good report, good, generous sentiments, and the public shall have the names of the committee who drafted it. They are N. H. MORGAN, S. H. KEELER. \* \* \*

And Judge Osborne, together with the young Secretary of State, Hon. N. D. Sperry, who furnished me with the report and with other valuable information, will please accept my thanks.—AUTHOR.

So the census has it in two divisions, as "*number wholly relieved,*" *paupers in re*, and as "*number relieved in part,*" i. e. the common and respectable poor, who are thus, it may be, kept out of the poor-house.—AUTH.

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F.—p. 461.

PAUPERISM ABROAD: in BELGIUM, showing its frightful extent, and that "*in procuring labor for the poor,*" is the hope of its abatement.

AUTH.

"PAUPERISM.—The discussions of the Second Chamber on the Charitable Institutions bill elicited very valuable information on the present state of pauperism in Belgium. According to M. Percival, a speaker of the Liberal party, the nation consists of 908,000 families, 89,000 of which are wealthy, 373,000 are in embarrassed circumstances, and 446,000 live upon what every day brings them. Of the latter 226,000 families are paupers, whom the state has to support. The aggregate income of the charitable institutions amounts to about ten millions of francs. Estimating the number of paupers who have to be supported at 800,000 individuals, the average support which the charitable institutions are able to afford to every individual would be four centimes a day. From 1828 to 1850, the number of paupers has been increased by 300,000 individuals, and from 1840 to 1850, the communities have had to contribute thirty millions for the support of the paupers. M. Percival concludes from these frightful statistics, the accuracy of which no speaker from the other side of the Chamber has contested, that the solution of the question of pauperism lies neither in an unlimited freedom of donations and bequests, nor in the restoration of corporations with personal rights, but in procuring labor for the poor. Some of the Catholic speakers charged against Protestantism with having produced pauperism, and found the only remedy for it in the Catholic Church, and more particularly in the spreading of convents, but they did not explain why so many countries which are almost entirely without a Protestant population, suffer so dreadfully from the spreading of pauperism." *N. Y. Independent*, June 25, 1857.

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G.—p. 461.

PAUPERISM IN ENGLAND AND WALES.—It declines *when the poorer classes can have employment*. A few years since the paupers of England, Scotland, Ireland and Wales, were estimated at several millions. And even now, by the following 'Parliamentary return,' the paupers of England and Wales are nearly 1,000,000 persons.—AUTH.

"DECLINE OF PAUPERISM.—It is gratifying to observe, from a Parliamentary return issued on Tuesday, that throughout the quarter ending at Lady-day last, there has been in every week a diminution of the numbers relieved both of in-door and out-door paupers, in England and Wales, as compared with the corresponding weeks of last year. In the last week of the quarter the total number was 897,445, against 928,561 last year, showing a decrease of 31,116. This is doubtless to be attributed, to a considerable extent, to the comparative cheapness of bread; but it is also a favorable indication as regards the employment of the poorer classes."—*N. Y. Independent*, July 16, 1857.

In 1848 the number relieved in England and Wales, in door and out door, was 1,626,201."—*U. S. Census*, 1850.

H.—p. 472.

The following bit of 'Romance' we found in either a New York or Philadelphia paper, but were unusually careless at the time in noting which.—AUTH.

#### ROMANCE OF LIFE.

The *Orleans Republican*, published at Albion, gives the following instance of romance in real life:

"In 1816 an enterprising man, possessed of some capital, removed to this section, which was then an unbroken forest, and took up a considerable tract of land, a part of which is now included in the limits of our thriving village. Where the Seminary now stands, he commenced his clearing, and built his humble cabin. After a while he became discontented, perhaps involved, sold his farm for a trifle, and suddenly disappeared, leaving behind his wife and child. After the lapse of years, a rumor came that he had been accidentally killed in Canada. His supposed widow, re-married, lived with her second

husband several years and died. In the fall of 1855, an old man, of most forlorn appearance, was seen at the corner of our principal streets, inquiring for the Poormaster. That officer was pointed out, and the old man told him that poverty had overtaken his old age, and that as he was one of the pioneers of Orleans county, he thought he should be supported here, and concluded by asking to be sent to the county house. After becoming satisfied of his identity, the Poormaster took him to the county house, and then proceeded to inform the son, whom the father considered dead, that his long absent parent was alive and had returned. The son—who was well-to-do in the world—immediately sought out his father and took him home, where he still is."

Instances of re-union after so long a separation are rare ; and still less often does it happen that a man returns to what was once his own property, and which he left almost an unbroken wilderness, to find it a thriving and prosperous village of four thousand inhabitants, and to witness on every hand evidence of wealth, while he who was formerly lord of the soil still remains in abject poverty.

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*From the Sentinel, Lawrence, Mass.*

This story, revealing, as it does, many of the dark spots upon the history of Papacy in America, will be sought after and widely read by those who desire to behold the system of Romanism unmasked, and standing forth in all its hideous deformity. The author states, in his preface, the incidents leading to his being put in possession of the facts, from the mouth of one of the principal actors in the sketch, a former Roman Catholic Priest.

*From the Journal, Clinton, Mass.*

This work has for its object the keeping in perpetual remembrance the monstrous evils of that system of theology that binds down the conscience, and lays claim to implicit obedience on the part of all its followers. The plot of the tale is deeply laid, and purports to have its foundation in truth. The incidents are of that startling character, that whoever commences the reading will continue to the terrible denouement, the violent death of Madelon, and the speedy retribution that followed the crimes of the infamous Father Heustace.

*From the Am. Presbyterian, Philadelphia, Pa.*

This, as its title page denotes, is a tale of horrors. Its scene is laid in Philadelphia, its chief actor being a Jesuit Priest, under whose sacred exterior lie hid murder and all wickedness. The writer is evidently fully convinced of the vileness of the Romish priesthood, and gives his imagination full play in depicting it.

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*From the Dispatch, Richmond, Va.*

Jesus was man, as well as God! In this book He is seen, conversed with, eaten with as a man! The book presents him in the social and moral relations of life, with exemplary fidelity to the Scripture narrative, and yet with a freshness which falls upon the mind like a new and thrilling narrative, and a life-likeness in every lineament which we feel must be true to the original. In truth, the reader, no matter how conversant with the sacred writings, is drawn along with breathless interest, and the very depths of his heart reached and stirred into uncontrollable emotion. Outside of the Holy Gospels themselves, we have never seen so moving a picture of the life of the Man of Sorrow, nor any representation of the wondrous beauty of the Divine character, so touching and so true.

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*From the New-York Chronicle.*

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### LADIES' TOILETTE TABLE.

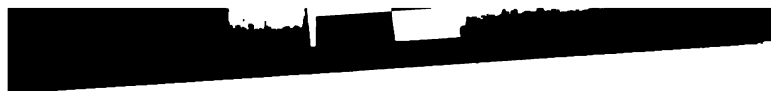
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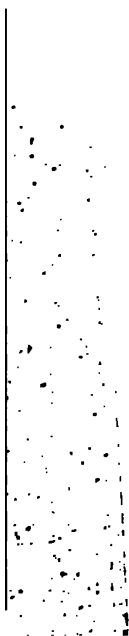
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